"Where there is no vision the people perish."

NOVEMBER 1928 DECEMBER

THE POETRY REVIEW

VOL. XIX No. 6

CONTENTS

The Roundhead, A. W. Uloth 381
The Rosy Cross, Marguerite Pollard 383
The Woman of Wist, Dorothy Rose 386
A Moment Pause, G. W. Eustace ; *Seven Dead Souls*, Irene Oldershaw 387
Gossip, Blanche T. Hartman 388
On Jarring Drums, Arthur Hood 389
October, Esther Samms ; *Sleep*, Eva Dobell 395
Chinese Vignette, Frederick Kemp ; *Poplars*, Silvia Dobson 396
Modern Greek Poetry : IX ; Prof. Simos Menardos 397
The Poet Soul : II ; J. Charles Davis 411
A Wish, John B. Seton Peacey 422
Dynamics of American Poetry : XIX ; Alice Hunt Bartlett 423
An American Classic's Parallels, Ethel M. Turner 430
On Mechanical Hallelujahs, Michael Roberts 433
Autumn Book Notes 439
The Premium Editor's Report 451
Young People's Verse 455
How Will it Be, W. S. Godfrey 458
A Verse Writers' Circle : Newcastle's Miniature Theatre, The Rawnsley Gold Medal, etc. 459, *et seq.*
The Poets' Calendar 460
Notes, Reports, and Announcements ii, v, vi, viii, x, etc.

All literary communications should be addressed to the Editor, The Poetry Review, Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1. No MSS. can be considered or returned unless accompanied by stamped addressed envelope. The Editor accepts no responsibility for the safe custody or return of any MSS.

Poetry Society and Poetry Review Subs. and communications must be addressed to the Secretary of the Society, 16 Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1.

One Shilling and Threepence net.

(Annual Postal Subscription, 7s. 6d. ; U.S.A. 2 Dollars.)

The Journal of The Poetry Society (Incorporated) and a magazine of general poetic interest published bi-monthly by The Poetry Society (Incorporated).

American Editorial Office : 299 Park Avenue, New York.

"The leading poetry magazine of the world . . . of international eminence."—LITERARY DIGEST.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/poetry-review_november-december-1928_19_6

THE ROUNDHEAD

IN poverty I dwell that have my pride
For sustenance, my sorrow for abode,
But I did hear this day at eventide
The distant drums, whereat I eased my load
And raised mine eyes unto the heavens wide,
And stood awhile in prayer beside the road.

Oft-times I heard that music heretofore
By hill and valley, marsh and moor and fen :
Now am I spent and I shall march no more,
But yet my heart is with the marching men.

For I have known the majesty of wars,
The open skies, the wind, the sun, the rain,
The dusty noon, the silence of the stars
With such a breed as shall not be again,

That knew to bear with hunger and with cold,
That plucked from out their breasts all carnal fears,
And I was of them, even I, of old,
The lusty Pikes, the cunning Musketeers,

Who oft outmarched the Horse through Irish bogs,
Who quelled the utmost fastness of the glen
In lands far north where sullen mountain-fogs
Deface the sun, and were not sated then,

But needs must ferry o'er the Narrow-Sea
In haste to meet upon the Flemish plain
The Prince of Condé his stout infantry,
And all the ancient chivalry of Spain.

Some speak of war with easy lips and try
Mine ears with tales that scarce may be believed,
And wealth of words and boastfulness, but I
Do pity such for they are self-deceived,

Who are afire with that strong wine of praise
—In truth the taste of victory is sweet—
But hearken to a soldier when he says,
They know not war who never knew defeat,

The fury of the Horse, the broken Pikes,
When men await the end that cometh soon,
And seasoned soldiers lurking in the dikes
Beneath the cruel glances of the moon,

And how a hunted man at dawn may chance
On some poor few that yet in arms do pass,
Known faces looking now, maybe, askance,
But fairer so than ever woman was !

Then pity not the soldier he is one
That men obey, a lord of lands, no less,
His roof the sky, his servitor the sun,
His every couch made soft with weariness,

And naught doth pass his lips but dainty fare,
For him athirst is water turned to wine,
And biscuit is become a victual rare
When hunger doth invite a guest to dine.

The man of law, the scholar in his gown
Is each in his own generation wise :
The careful merchant in the market-town
May gather to himself a richer prize,

But I long since disputed my degree
Where thronging line of battle was the school,
A more exacting university
To such as have submitted to the rule.

My goods are few, my body groweth old,
But I rejoice in that my soul hath health,
And holiness and hope, for I do hold
Not that I have, but what I am for wealth.

Ye mighty ones that lord it on the earth
Know this, that since the human kind began,
As war hath been the touchstone of his worth,
So war alone doth consummate a man !

The brotherhood of arms doth seem to breed
A greater love, a more enduring faith,
A clearer-seeing eye, a worthier deed
Amid the present menaces of death.

Content at last to walk in humble ways,
I strive to live and die in God His Truth,
To nourish in the winter of my days
The generous nobility of youth.

Broke in Thy wars, O Lord, am I who made
A single talent his whole increase bring :
My life hath been the hazard of my trade,
My traffic with the captains of a king :
Remember when my last account is paid,
And judge if this was but a little thing.

A. W. ULOTH.

THE ROSY CROSS

"*A sword shall pierce through thine own heart also.*"

MINE is the joy, the joy of Mary,
Mine is the still, deep bliss of clasping Him ;
Deep in my heart where love can never vary
I bear the Christ Child, tender bone and limb.

Mine is the joy of death which is true living,
Mine is the sorrow that shall end all tears,
Mine is the blessedness of giving,
Mine the far glory of exalted spheres.

Find heavenly death, for death is power,
Power of life for all the future years.
Find heavenly death, and through the bitter hour
Life shall come pouring from the fount of tears.

Find you the Risen Christ upon the waters,
Find Light and Love and Life for sacrifice,

Find you the Mother-Heart, my sons, my daughters,
Find the Red Rose that shines in Paradise.

Learn that to die is to find life for ever,
Learn that to die is an eternal gain,
That the Black Cross untasted, man can never
Know the ascended heights beyond the pain.

Then let the sword pierce through your own breast also
That pierced the Heart of Mary as of Christ,
So shall you dimly hear the words that fall so
Swift from the lips of all the sacrificed :

Take up your cross, so shall you find the Master ;
Deny yourself, for by the way of loss
Of all that binds the soul to its disaster
Shall bloom the Rose upon the bitter cross.

Are you to have an earth without a vision
Of God's great plan of ages yet to be ?
Shall you be man and have no fierce collision
With all the meanness of the things you see.

Are you to live ? Then know that life is holy,
That life is Christ, a life without a stain ;
Are you to die ? Behold ! the Cross most holy,
By dying find the Risen Lord again.

I do not see a shaken house divided,
I do not see a lost house built on sand,—
I see a soul the Christ hath always guided ;
I see a temple by Him only planned.

Lo ! once again God's Tabernacle dwelling
Here on the earth, His Ark amongst all men ;
The Chorus of the Ages, pealing, swelling,
Immanuel, God with us, Come again !

O hidden Life, O white, O strange, O lonely ;
Hidden with Christ, entombed with heaven's bliss,

By all things else forsaken, by Him only
Rapt in a white enduring holy kiss !

Is this Gethsemane, is this the Garden
Where I must watch with Him, but not alone ?
Or is this Golgotha ? Are these the crosses ?
Which is the one I must ascend, my Throne ?

Deep in my breast the Christ Babe wakes and hungers,
Saying : " I thirst, O soul, for you and you."
Deep in my breast the Child lies lone and wonders,
Its infant cry all unattended to.

These two are one Christ's tomb, the womb of Mary,
Mother and maid, the Virgin-hearted Christ ;
Sinner, be glad that in your dire quandary
Her mantle's cover hath for you sufficed.

Deep things of God lie folded in the flower,
The Incarnate Word within the Virgin's womb ;
That Word comes forth, the Word, the Voice of Power,
The Risen Christ ascends from earthly tomb.

Maiden of low degree, the Sun around me
Pours all His radiance in a holy kiss,
His potency and joy have all unwound me.
Can earth hold joy ? Behold then, it is this.

Maiden, I cry to you, O maids, O mothers !
Leave all and come to that still Upper Room
Where ye shall learn the secret of all others,
The Christ arising from the Virgin's womb.

There shall ye find the Cup of Blessing wait you,
And there the Flaming Gift of Pentecost ;
Though, for this Truth, the world for ever hate you,
I AM both Cup and Host and Holy Ghost.

Life is a death, and death is birth unending,
Birth to a life in long eternal years.

Life is a creeping forth, a valiant wending
To God, through shadows, tyrannies and tears.

Life is but this—a cry, a song, a dying,
A cradle song, an infant's cry, a kiss,
A parting, and a rending and a crying,
The joy and rapture of a mother's bliss.

MARGUERITE POLLARD.

THE WOMAN OF WIST

THE Woman of Wist is eerie fay,
As the lorn and lonely know,
With her face like mist on a woeful day,
And her hands like melting snow.

Her hair is dank, like dank sea-silk,
With the willow leaves entwined.
Her feet are whiter than whitest milk,
And they leave no print behind.

The two salt tears stand on her cheek ;
Her lashes glitter with two.
The lorn and lonely have heard her speak,
She has pierced their sad hearts through.

I searched all night for the Woman of Wist,
In a stumbling, grieving pain.
Her face sank into the swirling mist,
Her cold tears fell like rain.

A lonely night, till the morning star
Rang like a silver gong,
The sun slid over his gilded bar,
The skies were as blue as song,

And all I'd found was a sparkle-dart,
And dew on the willow spray.
The Woman of Wist had broken her heart
And wept herself away !

DOROTHY ROSE.

A MOMENT PAUSE . . .

A MOMENT pause and pausing think,
Ere thoughtless steps approach too near
The verge of time's unveiling brink,
And trembling see, with sudden fear,
Where far below the breakers show
Where broken vessels disappear.

Pause still awhile and pausing think,
How heady is the deadly wine,
Which blinds the eyes of those who drink
The vintage pressed by Proserpine,
And see too late a shattered grate
Lay bare a desecrated shrine.

Pause yet again and pausing think,
How big the loss must prove to be,
If now, though worn, the golden link,
Which bound your very soul to me,
Should part in twain and life remain
To rob the grave of memory.

G. W. EUSTACE.

SEVEN DEAD SOULS

SEVEN dead souls
Went a-marching down the road,
Six bore a burden light,
One bore a load;
Never a word
Was heard
From livid lips held tight.

Seven dead souls
Went a-marching up the hill,
Six stepped with steady pace,
One lagged until
Voices behind
His mind
Bade him take up the chase.

Seven dead souls
  Went a-marching to the West,
Six of them crossed the Bar,
  One sought a quest :
" Shall I find love
  Above ? "
He said, " I've sought it far."

Seven dead souls
  Went a-marching by the moon,
Six felt its glowing rays ;
  One cried, " Come soon
Love, I am tired,
  So tired
Of slipping through the days."

Seven dead souls
  Lay a-sleeping 'neath the sky :
All of them wore a smile,
  No one knew why.

IRENE OLDERSHAW.

GOSSIP

HE rises high but rises to a fall
Who counters gossip in his upward flight
And bears the stigma of her deadly blight.
Oh pity him who fails to make his goal
The victim of a word equivocal.
May he attempt anew the lofty height
Where soul meets soul in rapturous delight
While Zoilus slinks beneath her leaden pall.

The hawk avoids the heron on the ground
And waits until his prey is on the wing,
Then beating down his victim's stout defence
He strikes mid-air and deals the bloody wound.
But you, drab gossip, with your poisoned sling
Take stealthy aim and wing sweet innocence.

BLANCHE T. HARTMAN.

ON JARRING DRUMS

IT may be that, as John Freeman phrases it, music comes from the insistent beating on drums—a beating that jars and arouses us from a complacent, intellectual idleness. Unhappily, the reverse is also true; the fine tympanum of the jar may be so incessantly jarred that it finally loses all sense of the ugly. This delicate perceptivity of the ear in poetry-readers is as cardinal a need as the sensitiveness of a surgeon's finger-tips in performing a complicated operation. At the same time the far-carrying tap-tap of a beaten drum calls us to something—warning, or war, or the invasion of an alien force. Forty years ago Edgar Lee Master's *Spoon River Anthology* would have been the advance of an alien force into the realm of Poetry. But, gradually, the confines of that realm have been enlarged; tracts, that our forefathers would have called rank marshes, have been included; and the drums have been beaten round the inmost walls of the citadel.

To that "region Elenore—mystical in music—Thrice-threefold walled with emerald from our mortal mornings grey," comes "A Dramatic Poem" (with jarring of a drum)—*Jack Kelso*, by Edgar Lee Masters (D. Appleton and Co.). It is as a dramatic poem that we consider it in these pages. It is the record of hopeless failure, the life of a man whose mind is filled with dreams of beauty, but whose days are mean and his actions sordid; in the end he is beaten down, and he dies in saving a lad's life when his own intention had been to drown himself. This shambling figure should be pathetic, from the dramatic side, but our sense of pathos is reduced to one of dislike by his own confessions. He is dismissed from a job for dishonesty, "Thieves who have turned me to a little thief"; we more than half suspect that he killed his nagging wife, although Abraham Lincoln is put forward as having cleared him of that charge. He utters blasphemies, "So does an oriental fable about a Jewish Carpenter The city and the village stir," —to quote only one of his gibes. The stage on which this Jack Kelso moves is a confusion of figures; there is an inadequate glimpse of Lincoln and Douglas and Ann Rutledge; a crowd of Indians, robbers, tobacco sellers; a

preacher and a scientist, a defalcating " Judge," a loquacious creature called Bobo, and a Mrs. Sugg ; and, banging about amongst all these, policemen—who to us, accustomed to our fine police force—seem impossible ruffians. Into this gyrating crowd comes also Brigham Young ; and he is as inadequate a figure as Lincoln ; for as Lincoln was a very great man, Brigham Young was, at least, a remarkable man ; and Salt Lake City under his rule was the most law-abiding town in America.

Amid this confusion of persons we have such bald screaming as, " You idler ! You dreamer ! You loafing prophesier, Quit gawking at the river now and cut wood for the fire." (Note that " prophesier " and " for the fire " stand for rhymes.) " Mystical in music " or the jarring of a drum ? And this—as a specimen of the dialogue—

Kelso. " Ann Rutledge, this is Abram Linkern."
Ann. " Yes, I know ; they told me."
Lincoln. " Glad to meet you, Miss."

Now, contradictory as it may seem to be, stark naturalism often defeats its main object, which is realism : and by these bald speeches Masters adds nothing to the realization of the character of Abraham Lincoln, but the rather blurrs his picture. At the same time there is beauty in many of the soliloquies uttered by Jack Kelso, and a pathetic lyric spoken by Ann Rutledge :—

" The bird of moonlight memory pours
Its incantation on the hill :
Whippoorwill ! Whippoorwill !

This is a wingèd memory
As if a woman were complaining,
Too hurt for words, too hurt for tears.
I seem to hear the pioneers
Their memories of old refraining."

And Kelso cries :

" What richer gift is granted
To man than has been given thus to me ?
Spirit or God, or what it was implanted
Power in my soul to know the ecstasy
Of river and woodland, and the rising moon ;
And winter's snow which clothes the fields with stillness " :

This same Kelso has other speeches full of poetic insight, which space will not allow of quoting ; but we are brought down suddenly and crashingly to earthbound prose with Kelso apostrophising Lincoln's statue, with this conclusion:

> " Wars will arise to wear the masquerade
> Of Liberty, but no Liberty will prevail
> Until the whole world blossoms with free trade."

And the poet disappears from before us, leaving a dreary politician on a dusty platform.

From the study of men we pass to the Adoration of Nature, as set forth by John Freeman in *Collected Poems* (Macmillan and Co.), for this poet's mind dwells mostly amid " green meadows, with only trees and quivering sky to hedge the sight." Except for a few allusions to an absent, or dead, loved one—and, in passing, one reflects that Browning alone, until his wife's death, was a poet who did not lament an absent or dead loved one—these collected poems scarcely touch on mankind ; the one long poem which may be said to deal with humanity has this strange *volte face* that it is of the wax-work figures that melted in Tussaud's Exhibition. In reading the many beautiful raptures on trees, skies, the sea and the moon, it recalls to memory how one poet cried,

> " Nature, poor stepdame, cannot slake my drought.
> Never did any milk of hers once bless my thirsting mouth."

As the anchorite withdraws himself to muse on the God of his own conception so John Freeman retires to watch and worship Nature.

> " The joyous morning ran and kissed the grass
> And drew his fingers through her sleeping hair,
> And cried, ' Before thy flowers are well awake
> Rise, and the lingering darkness from thee shake.' "

There are many lines of equal beauty which voice the singer's personal delight in all the varying aspects of Nature. The underlying question to these rapturous songs is, do they sound a deeper reverberation than the poet's own sensations ? Do they find an echo in the heart of the man in the street ? It may be urged that artists do not

labour and suffer sweat of soul for uncultured toilers; possibly they do not and should not do so; but their completed work should, nevertheless, be so universal an appeal that the most unlettered wayfarer is caught by it into an astonished pause. God, or Nature, is the great artist, and the voice of the wind among the trees, the golden pomp of a sunset, or the glory of the moonlit seas, these have stirred the souls of men who have never heard of the Sitwells, and whose ejaculation, when so moved, would probably be "My Gawd!" Certainly Poetry should never be written for the multitude, but when written it should make a universal appeal; else it is but an art of the salon, the polite amusement of prigs and dilettantes. There is one of John Freeman's poems that has for its subject two little children found dead beside their dead mother during the bitter winter of 1917. He compares them to the starving birds,

> "The dead birds lay in the light on the snow-flecked field,
> Their song and beautiful free winging stilled."

And "When the new morn stepped from the same cold East," the little children "lay unawakened in the barren light." And he cries:

> "There is not pity enough in heaven or earth,
> There is not love enough, if children die
> Like famished birds."

Unhappily, or so it seems to us, there comes a cloud over the entire sincerity of the poet, when he concludes:

> "And I have made, children, these verses for you,
> Lasting a little longer than your breath";

Alas! such verses should not be "made," they should lie like the nail of the cross on Theodolin's bosom,

> "White of heat, awakes to flame.
> Red of heat, it shall be pressed,
> White of heat, once on my breast."

The Wax Works has received a good deal of praise; it has for its motive an original idea, but the verse is too often pedestrian, the fourth line taking the bit into its teeth and sometimes making ten beats, sometimes twelve, and at

another time reining up at seven. And there is our awkwardness in rhyme in the stanza :

> " Where now is Fred Archer, where is Dan Leno,
> Where's Horatio Bottomley and General Booth,
> Where's Bloody Mary and Charles the Second,
> And the Princes slain in the Tower in their youth ? "

Now, it is true that all poets have, at times, been guilty of using words as rhymes that do not rhyme ; Thompson in " drought " and " mouth," or awkwardnesses, as Byron, in " a glass was set " that " did not seem to hold sherbet." But where the verse is noble, as in Thompson, such lapses are more easily forgiven, but *The Wax Works*, though quaint, is not noble, either in theme or treatment. It is undeniable that many persons, themselves poetic, will delight in John Freeman's delicate perceptions of beauty in his outlook upon nature ; he sees loveliness in aspects that would escape the eye of ordinary, prosaic folk.

> " The loveliness that is the secret shape
> Of once-seen, sweet and oft-dreamed loveliness,
> The brain that builds shape, memory, dream and all."

It is as on a man wakened from gentle, dozing musing by the harsh cry of " Fire ! Fire ! " that Sean O'Casey's play, *The Silver Tassie* (Macmillan and Co.) breaks in on us after *Collected Poems*. *The Silver Tassie* being a play and not a poem, it might seem that it hardly comes within the scope of this review, but Sean O'Casey is a poet, and reveals it in all his work. His former plays have been sternly realistic, but always as a poet sees realism. *Juno and the Paycock* was so realistic as to be profoundly pathetic, now in *The Silver Tassie* this quality seems to be overborne and almost swept aside by the poet in the author ; for from whence, except from the heart of a poet, could come such lines as :

> " In green and purple porcelain vases,
> Patient of the life around them,
> Peep deeply blue and yellow blossoms."

Or

> " Then the decorations of security
> Become the symbols of self sacrifice."

And, in defiance of his own literalness, he puts these lines

into the mouths of soldiers who, a moment before, had been uttering the usual low and somewhat obscene language of the gutter. It is not the vulgar expressions that are out of perspective but the poetic. The whole is a picture without a ray of light; while one character seems to us totally unworthy of Sean O'Casey's penetration and keen observation. That is the "Staff-Wallah"; he is a buffoon out of a comic opera. God knows there were only too many entirely incompetent staff officers at the front at whose doors lies the needless slaughter of better men than themselves, but this "Staff-Wallah" is a wire-pulled Jack-in-the-box. Barney is the most understandable character of all the crowd, brave, affectionate, and yet a traitor to his friend; the author leaves us in doubt as to whether Susie's unctuous mouthing of texts was merely rank hypocrisy or whether the experiences of the hospital made her the heartless, detestable creature she becomes. This doubt also applies to the pious expressions chorused by Harry and Teddy under their cruel deprivations; we cannot divine whether they mean to imply a bitter gibe or a spirit of resignation. The author is a man of undoubted genius, but we venture to think that in writing *The Silver Tassie* he has allowed his hatred of the stupidities, obscenities, and the ghastly blunders of the war to overbear his saner outlook, therefore we shrink somewhat from this play, not because of its ugly representation of an ugly thing, but because it is unrelieved by any ray of human kindliness, any reflection of the glory of self-sacrifice. It leaves our hearts sore, as the voice of a man cursing, who, because he is so hideously wounded, cannot see his God nor his fellow-man in his present agony. The passing of the Nun, and the voices of the Nun's prayers alone lift the whole from an utterly hopeless outlook. Without that tender episode we feel inclined to cry, "If this is the life of men, then the sooner judgment wipes them from the face of the earth the better." We are ready to admit that we may not have entirely grasped the author's intention; genius is not always read correctly by those who run.

ARTHUR HOOD.

OCTOBER

THE year's high noon of passionate heat is o'er,
Hardly her sweet green youth she calls to mind ;
Short grow the days, and shrewdly blows the wind;
Leaves sadly fall unhinged by phantoms hoar,
Or madly whirl when autumn's great gales roar.
In brilliant red or dusky ruby rind
Fat berries gleam for darting birds to find ;
Winter's wee sleepers hurry on their store.
In veiling mists the days begin and cease,
Though noon is mellow in the sun's warm gold,
And wine-red landscape basking in its peace
Glows with a missal's generous colours old.
Glamour and beauty hide the year's decease,
Colour and warmth defy the creeping cold.

ESTHER SAMMS.

SLEEP

OUR conscious soul is like some tide-brimmed pool
Beside the margin of a boundless sea,
Where bright-fringed weeds move with the ebb and flow,
Anemones unfurl in crevice cool,
And frail translucent fish dart to and fro.
Then a moon-born Compulsion silently
Draws home the still pool-water to the Deep.
Slowly it ebbs ; Anemones, dull rose
And green, fold softly. Seaweeds on the brink
Hang flaccid as their wav'ring beauty goes.
Slowly it ebbs.—So ebbs the soul to sleep :
Slowly our swaying, coloured fancies sink :
Slowly the tendrils of our thoughts up-close.

Where rove those waters from the pool withdrawn ?
Through what vast glimm'ring oceans, and lost caves ?
By what far beaches and strange coasts unknown ?
And nameless islands, mist-wrapt in the dawn ?
Empty the pool, waiting the tide's recall.
Only some impulse from on-coming waves
Sends lengthening ripples through the rocky cleft,
Stirring the woods that droop of life bereft ;

On spindrift foam of dreams they rise and fall.
Rumour of throbbing surge from far comes blown.
Back in full-flood the Tides of Being sweep ;
Back through the channels of the brain they stream.
Filled is the pool ; its world awakened all.

But one day, setting seawards, there will be
An ebbing tide, returning nevermore
To brim the pools along the Mind's dark shore ;
(Oh, peace of waters stilled within the Deep !
Oh, hush of moonlight on a tideless sea !)
The Sleep that knows no waking and no dream.

EVA DOBELL.

CHINESE VIGNETTE

ALMOND boughs by the pool
smile at the cherry and plum,
vain sisters trailing their flowery robes
over rippling waves of moist grasses,
where dance and pirouette
the gentle narcissi.
From the dun rocks' shade
come sleeping whispers
among the swaying green-grey reeds.
Under white mountain peaks in the melting sky
a painted kiosk peeps from the glowing hills.
On the many-coloured waters a blue bar lies,
the shadow of a golden bamboo bridge
lightly leaning on its breast.

FREDERICK KEMP.

POPLARS

TEN grey poplars,
Watching all forlorn.
Leafless, flowerless,
Weeping in the dawn.

Springtime, Summertime
Somewhere have I seen
Ten gay poplar trees
Dressed in green.

SILVIA DOBSON.

MODERN GREEK POETRY—IX

SOURIS—DROSSINIS—PALAMAS—PROVELENGHIOS AND OTHERS

FOR many a reason criticism of contemporary poets is not an easy task—first because, as an English critic has said, we do not like to recognize our living poets as great men. On the other hand, a lecture on a living poet is, undoubtedly, an honour. But this series would be most incomplete if it did not include those poets who are of the present τῶν Μουσῶν προφῆται (interpreters of the Muses) in Greece. Therefore I shall say something about a few of them, selecting those who have been awarded the State's official prize of Letters and Arts ; and also mention some of the others, τῶν ὑπὲρ τὰ πεντήκοντα ἔτη γεγονότων, who are not younger than fifty.

But before we come to them let us revise what we have dealt with so far. We have alternatively given our attention to the Ionian Islands, where the old civilization had survived, and to the regenerated Athens, which was saturated with the poetry of Phanari and afterwards of Paris ; and we have unreservedly preferred the art of the Ionians, who were more genuine in their inspiration and more skilful in the execution—as they had Solomos for their master. Now we shall see how the new poetical school of Athens broke off its connection with the previous one by voluntarily joining the ranks of the disciples of Solomos.

In 1877 a noteworthy event took place. The " Parnassus Literary Society " proclaimed a dramatic competition and the Committee, whose reporter was Emmanuel Roïdes, the best of the Greek writers, did not award the prize to any competitor. And when one of them censured the decision, Roïdes did something more daring still. He declared that all those who wrote verses in the puristic language were not worthy of being called poets, and that only the following five could worthily bear that name—Solomos, Villaras, Christopoulos, Valaoritis and Achilles Paraschos. He also mocked the then prevailing ultra-romanticism about which we have already spoken. Roïdes' sarcasm at once dried the

tears of the romantics. The poetry-loving youth began to study the folk-songs and Solomos, whom Roïdes declared to be a model. Since that time all the poems of Solomos have become known in Athens, and an altar has gradually been raised to that unknown God.

It was a fortunate coincidence that some satirical newspapers were published at that time at Athens—the *Ῥαμπαγᾶς* (Rambagas) of Cleanthes Triantafyllos, and *Μὴ Χάνεσαι* ("Don't worry)" of Vlassios Gabrielides. In satiric papers artificial language cannot hold its own. Cleanthes Triantafyllos translated some of Beranger's poems and he wrote some light and pretty little ditties of his own. Thus the puristic language began to disappear from poetry. Its adorers were getting old, and D. Bernardakis was the only one to win a victory with his *Fausta*, but even that success was a temporary one and the last. In 1888 Professor Psichari published in prose his *Ταξίδι* ("Pilgrimage") which was recommended by Roïdes, and in 1893 Roïdes published *Τὰ Εἴδωλα* ("The Idols"), a philippic against the archaistic language. All this had the effect of drawing the young writers of verse towards the Corfiote poets, while their number was steadily increasing. In 1890, when Polylas published his *Literary Language* and Marcoras his *Poetical Works*, the victory of the colloquial dialect in modern Greek poetry was definite and irrevocable. Nearly all the standard-bearers of the new ideas are still living. But nobody will be disappointed if I say that Costis Palamas and George Drossinis stand out foremost in lyric poetry; they are both sexagenarians, and they both began, but never finished their legal studies.

But before these poets I must mention their senior, who began and finished the course of philosophic studies, although he fortunately did not succeed in obtaining the diploma. This is George Souris, the most prolific and most popular of living Greek poets, and the first to obtain the official prize. Souris, who was born in Syra, in the year 1853, although of Chian origin, made his first appearance in the paper "*Μὴ Χάνεσαι*," and in the other satiric publication of the time, the "*Παλιάνθρωπος*" ("The

Scamp "). But he was destined to put in the shade all the other Greek satiric poets with his paper "*'Ρωμηός*," which so often made thousands of Greeks enjoy a good hearty laugh. The name was thought of by Drossinis, and the cartoon, appearing at the heading of the paper which depicts the proverbial *ρωμιὸς* (*'Ρωμαῖος*, Greek) smoking narghileh, was a sketch by Themos Anninos. But the myriads of verses which have been written have all without an exception flowed from Souris' indefatigable pen. His verses before they appeared in print were submitted to domestic censorship, to which we may attribute the excellent tact of this paper. While Alexander Soutsos, as we remember, had been persecuted by all the Governments and risked lynching by the people, Souris was loved even by those he ridiculed; this constitutes a veritable phenomenon at Athens, where Aristophanes himself had judicial troubles. The reason is that the satire of Souris was a kind of light social philosophy, which humorously attributes all the mistakes we have committed—and are still committing—to natural defects of the Greek race, which, of course, has not come spotless out of its long slavery. The causes of a good many of the above shortcomings are rather to be found in the poverty of the small kingdom. But if the historian of the future ever wishes to study the social and literary conditions of King George's times and the great improvement of the last few decades, I do not think he will find anywhere a truer picture than in the versified dialogues of Souris' heroes, Fassoulis and Pericletos. And this is so because Souris never loses sight of a fact—which is often forgotten by his lyric colleagues—that is, the public for which he writes. He does not attempt to look into the cloudy depths of the future and—to use his own words—*καὶ εἶναι μόνη δόξα μου τοῦ κόσμου ἡ δεκάρα* " my only ambition is the penny of the public ". In this way the circulation of *Romios* occasionally exceeded the number of 15,000 copies—a figure unreached even by a good many daily newspapers. And this, I think, is an essential fact. Roïdes, who was always fond of making jokes, once characterized *Romios*

with just two words: ἔμμετρος πεζολογία ("Prosaism, written in verse"). A long essay by Psichari examining Souris' volumes of separate poems arrived at the same conclusion. But, I think that if Fassoulis' verses were Latin satires, they would most probably find many enthusiastic admirers. *Romios*, of course, did not possess the same force every week. This is also the case with some wines. But the spirituous beverage which the Greek used to drink every week, had the great advantage that it was made from genuine Chian—and not foreign wit: it was always refreshing, occasionally burning the tongue, and very often had a fine taste not only for Greeks. Tigrane Yerghate, the Armenian poet and patriot, extolled Souris' talent (in the *Revue des Revues*, 15 Janvier, 1897), and Gaston Deschamps in his *Grèce d'aujourd'hui* says that whenever he compares Souris with French satiric poets of the same type he feels his national pride humiliated. Undoubtedly, anywhere, a Sour s would be a national asset.

II

Georgios Drossinis, who descends from a historic family of Missolonghi, was born at Athens and remained an Athenian, being the poetic representative of the new artistic taste of Athens. One can discern in him the artistic nature, not only in his verse, which he writes in charming popular language and with a graceful rhyme, but even in the editions of his works with their nice print and beautiful front pages. He has been the editor of many periodicals and for several years now he has been the Director of the Department of Arts at the Ministry of Education. He also started writing verses in the "*Μὴ χάνεσαι*" under the nom-de-plume of *'Αράχνη* ("Spider") and the collection of his first poems (in 1880) bears the title of *'Ιστοὶ 'Αράχνης* ("Spider's web"). He afterwards wrote articles and short stories for the periodical *Hestia*. Some of those were translated into Dutch and Spanish, and they are also very well known in England from Mrs. Edmonds' translations, which were published by two popular libraries, the Pseudonym Library

and the Children Library. One of these stories, *Amaryllis*, is a little masterpiece. Drossinis nurtured his artistic taste in Leipzig and Dresden, and he translated some of Lenau's works. From Germany he learned the popular expression of poetry, but he fortunately knew how to be inspired by Greek rural life, which he studied in Eubœa and Thessaly. In 1887 he took up the editorship of *Hestia*, in which the younger poets made their appearance. In 1894 Drossinis converted *Hestia* into a daily newspaper, which is still one of the leading newspapers of Athens, and he then founded an educational periodical "*Ἐθνικὴ ἀγωγὴ*" ("National Education"). He afterwards collaborated with Bikelas and published a magazine "*Μελέτη*" ("The Study"). But he also wrote verses during that period, and from time to time he published his beautiful editions after the *Spiders' Webs*, *οἱ Σταλακτῖται* ("Stalactites," 1884), *Εἰδύλλια* ("Idyls," 1885), *Ἀμάραντα* ("Amaranths," 1891), *Γαλήνη* ("Calm," 1902), *Φωτερὰ σκοτάδια* ("Brightness," 1914), and lastly the *Κλειστά βλέφαρα* ("Closed Eyelids," 1918).

Everything written by Drossinis, whether in prose or verse, is always delightful. In his poems one notices a continuous improvement of the execution which, I think, is brought to perfection in the *Γαλήνη*.

Drossinis belongs to the painting poets; he copies picturesque landscapes, knowing all the natural details of the country and reproducing the shades of mountain, sky and sea with the grace and transparency of a splendid water-colour picture. When we read the *Γαλήνη*, not only do we see the shining stillness of nature, but we also feel the corresponding happiness of the poet himself. The poem *Τὸ παραθύρι μας* ("Our window") is an example of this poetical painting, in which beautiful words take the place of harmonious colours.

After an almost complete silence, Drossinis published *τὰ Φωτερὰ σκοτάδια*, a volume which carried the National Prize of Letters and Arts and represents a new period of the poet's art. From the very first poem one notices the change of tone in his verse, which, I think, is partly to be attributed to Jean Moreas' influence. Drossinis appears as a

melancholy and even a religious man. He no more pays attention to the smiling nature, but, instead, he turns to the depression of his soul, which he tries to express not by rhetoric—as the old romantic poets—but with a trembling voice. Instead of the former clear lines of the sketch which was so Greek, he now uses vague and uncertain phrases, in order to show disappointed hopes and shattered dreams.

Ὦ θαλασσο θεμέλιωτα καὶ ἡλιόσκεπα παλάτια
Χτισμέν' ἀπὸ τὰ σύννεφα τῆς θερινῆς βραδυᾶς
Σ' ἐσᾶς ἐχρυσοθρόνιασαν δυὸ δακρυσμένα μάτια
Τὸ πιὸ μεγάλο ἀπόκρυφο μιᾶς ἄρρωστης καρδιᾶς.

We see that the poet, although with tears in his eyes, continues to discern pretty colours, but he is not perhaps so successful in the expression of his feelings. And the philosophy, to which he appeals, does not seem to respond very naturally or with great promptness. The following lines remind one of Mabilis :—

Μέ τὰ λευκὰ φτερὰ τῆς Φαντασίας
'Ανάλαφρ' ἡ ἀγάπη σας πετᾷ
Στὸν ἄϋλον κόσμο τῆς 'Αθανασίας.

"On the white wings of Imagination Your love flies lightly to the ideal world of Immortality."

Also when the poet's soul flies to "spiritual Paradises and to Skies of Love" I think that it follows Palamas' flights. Personally, I like Drossinis best when he expresses his ideas with pictures rather than with big words, such as the above, spelt with capital initials.

Lately Drossinis published the volume *Κλειστὰ Βλέφαρα* comprising the poems he wrote between 1914 and 1917. Quite a number of them are written in a free verse which, I confess, I am not fond of. Jean Moreas soon gave up the innovation of the free verse in French, and if the *Closed Eyelids* mean lack of rhyme, I must say that I prefer Drossinis with "open eyelids." Nevertheless, some of these poems, such as the *Greetings of the Sea*, are very pretty, and can be compared with the best poems of Verhaeren.

III

Kostis Palamas is by general consent admitted to be the prince amongst the living poets, and according to his admirers the greatest poet produced by regenerated Greece. Palamas is proud of the fact that he derives his origin from Missolonghi, is the grandson of Panayiotis Palamas, who founded the school of Missolonghi, and the grandson of John Palamas, who was head-master of an Athens school, and who in 1814 was one of the founders of the *Φιλόμουσος Ἑταιρεία*. His father was a judge in Patras when the poet himself was born. As he himself says, he began to write verses at the age of nine. In 1875, when sixteen years old, he went to Athens. He was a great admirer of the two young elegiac poets, who had just died and also of Achilles Paraschos. He narrates that in 1877 he discovered a pamphlet with ten odes of Kalvos, who up to that time was almost unknown at Athens. He then began to change his ideas, and in 1877 he was converted to the credo of Roïdes. With the new ideas he began to write in the "*Ῥαμπαγᾶς*" and in the "*Μὴ Χάνεσαι*," and from 1882 in the *Hestia*, wherein he published poems, chronicles, short stories; *Ὁ ὑπολοχαγός* ("The Lieutenant") was the first of the number, dealing with the Cretan revolution of 1866. He also wrote critiques praising the Ionian School, Polylas, Marcoras, Typaldos, and Solomos, of whose works he published a new edition.

Palamas also followed up French literature, and through French translations he became acquainted with all the foreign great poets. Certainly, not very many scholars follow the literary movement of Europe and America with such an attention as Palamas does, in spite of all his occupations. Since 1897 he has been the general secretary of the University of Athens, but his poetical activity has not been by any means diminished. The volumes of his poems have the following titles and dates :—

Τὰ τραγούδια τῆς Πατρίδος μου ("My country's songs"), 1881.
Ὕμνος εἰς τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν ("Hymn to Athena"), 1889.
Τὰ μάτια τῆς ψυχῆς μου ("The Eyes of my soul"), 1892.
Ἰαμβοι καὶ Ἀνάπαιστοι ("Iambics and anapaests"), 1897.

Τάφος (" Grave "), 1898.
Οἱ Χαιρετισμοὶ τῆς Ἡλιογέννητης (" The Greetings of the sunborn girl "), 1900.
Τρισεύγενη (" A tragedy "), 1903.
Ἡ Ἀσάλευτη Ζωή (" The tranquil Life "), 1904.
Ὁ Δωδεκάλογος τοῦ Γύφτου (" The Gypsy man's twelve Rhapsodies "), 1907.
Ἡ Φλογέρα τοῦ Βασιλιᾶ (" The King's Flute "), 1910.
Πολιτεία καὶ Μοναξιά (" Town and Loneliness "), 1910.
Καημοὶ τῆς Λιμνοθάλασσας (" The Sorrows of the Lagoon "), 1912.
Βωμοί (" Altars "), 1915.

It would, of course, be impossible to criticize with a few words a poetical inspiration which is to be found in twelve volumes, and to follow up a forty years' career of a poet who is also a critic and a story-writer. His story, *Θάνατος Παλληκαριοῦ* (" A Gallant Young Man's Death ") is perhaps the best of all Greek novels. Through these thousands of verses Palamas dreams, muses, philosophizes, praises Gods ancient and modern, narrates, complains, sings, trumpets, beats war drums, curses, stigmatizes, satirizes, and, what is more sad, he laments, but he again regains courage, he dreams of heaven, he feels his immortality, he predicts the future of the race, and to-day he completes new volumes to be printed and he is preparing more for the same purpose.

Nor is it easy to define Palamas' technique; he has been evidently influenced in turn by Sully Prudhomme, Leconte de Lisle, Musset, Hugo, Carducci, Nietzsche, Ibsen, Verhaeren, and the other votaries of free verse and by all the critics of the *Revue des deux Mondes*. From his contemporary Greeks he admired Jean Psichari and Prof. Nicolaos Politis, whose voluminous works on folk-lore exercise perhaps a more beneficial influence on his Muse. Thus Palamas' art is not a definite one, but it is rather continually being changed, like Proteus, is *Πρωτεϊκή*, according to his favourite word; it is certainly not like painting nor sculpture, but rather like music and perhaps like Oriental dancing, which expresses the feelings of the soul by means of different attitudes and movements of the body. This powerful artist sets many musical instruments in

motion and produces a melody which is almost always impressive; but the many often do not understand the whole, and at times even the few get tired of its length. Really to enjoy Palamas' most difficult poems one must have a good introduction and read them over and over again. As long as the nation's artistic education is improving, it is probable that this poetry, which is neither ancient nor modern Greek, will find better reception, because the national folk-songs and this art have nothing in common except the language and sometimes the subject. Paradoxical as it may sound, Palamas' poetry often reminds one of the higher Byzantine poetry—especially in the vagueness and exaggeration of phrase. For instance, this verse from *The Altar* relating to the beginning of the universe (p. 110) στὴν ὑπερούσιαν ἄναρχη καθολικὴ πηγή της might have been a hymn written by Patriarch Sergius or Theodore Studites. The ancient poets had, as Shelley used to say, "a restrained grandeur," or what Renan used to call a *tact divin*. But Palamas in a few verses apostrophizes and makes use of the vocative case a greater number of times than Homer does in the whole of his poems.

His tendency also to a poetical βακχεία (frenzy), as it appears in the Χαιρετισμοὶ τῆς Ἡλιογέννητης seems to be a poetical weakness rather than strength. Nevertheless, Palamas' great compositions, such as *The Tranquil Life*, *The King's Flute*, and *The Gypsy Man's Twelve Rhapsodies* are admired even by those who do not understand the order of the whole. From many of those pages proceed melodies worthy of great poets. It is indeed an honour for Greece that in spite of such a long poetical past a new Greek poet succeeded in creating something original. And now that I must give specimens of Palamas' poems I find myself in an *embarras du choix*. All the educated Greeks will probably remember something from his works. For my part I prefer that splendid series of his sonnets, which are called Πατρίδες (countries), and begin with a picture of Patras and Missolonghi and then proceed to depict Greece, Europe, the Earth, the solar system, and finish up with Sirius, and Chaos.

IV

Aristomenes Provelenghios was an islander who was born in Siphnos in 1850, and studied philosophy in Germany. In his younger days he wrote "epicolyric" poems, *Θησεύς* ("Theseus," 1870), *Τὸ Μῆλον τῆς Ἔριδος* ("The Apple of Discord," 1871), in archaistic language, following Rangabe's example, and dramas *Ῥήγας* ("Rigas") and *ἡ Κόρη τῆς Λήμνου* ("The Girl of Lemnos," 1901). In 1887 he translated Goethe's *Faust*—he was neither the first nor the last Greek to do so—using archaic language in some parts and a mixture of puristic and colloquial in others. He used this kind of mixed popular language not only in his lyrics, but also in his later tragedies of which *Nicephorus Phocas* is the best. In his lyric poems Provelenghios combines descriptions of the nature of his little island with the expression of his deepest feelings. From his feelings which are always noble, he also rises into higher trains of thought, but this philosophy is not heavy. Provelenghios might be called a more expressive and a more pious Paparrigopoulos. From his first volume of the *Ποιήματα* ("Poems"), which he published in 1896, all those related to the illness and death of his wife and those which deal with his orphan children are truly touching. In the *Young Nun* he skilfully depicts the feelings in a young sister's bosom when she hears a lovesong at the distance. *Ἡ βουλιαγμένη Πόλις* ("The Submerged City") is prettier still. The legend sounds like a Greek tradition, but, unless I am mistaken, the poet was inspired by a French tradition of Bretagne, with which Renan begins his *Souvenirs d'enfance et de jeunesse*.

Twenty years after his first volume Provelenghios published the second (1916), comprising all the poems which he wrote during that period. The affection he always felt for insular life here becomes stronger and his recollections are portrayed more poetically taking the form and the pitch of home-sickness.

The first poem, *Διπλῆ Ζωή* ("Double Life") is a beautiful facing to the whole collection. The volume comprises also

some verses on sea life and, at the end, a picturesque description of a windmill. The middle of the volume is reserved for the *Νικητήρια* (" Festival of Victory "), the poems which the poet wrote during the two victorious Greek wars in 1912 and 1913. A noble self-restraint of enthusiasm is the best feature of these verses.

John Polemis, an Athenian who studied in Paris, was rewarded in 1914 with the National Prize. Many of his poems have been set to music and have become popular. He published numerous collections with splendid titles such as *Χειμώνανθοι* (" Snowdrops," 1888, *'Αλάβαστρα* (" Alabasters," 1901), *Κειμήλια* (" Gems "), *'Εξωτικά* (" Exotics "), *Τό παλιό βιολί* (" The Old Violin ") and the *Σπασμένα μάρμαρα* (" Broken Marbles "), and some little versified dramas such as *Τό "Ονειρο* (" The Dream," 1898), the *Εἰκόνισμα* (" Ikon," 1900), the *Στὴν ἄκρη τοῦ κρημνοῦ* (" On the Brink of the Precipice," 1901), the *Γυναῖκα* (" Woman ").

The poetical art of Polemis is closely akin to that of Drossinis. Moreover, Polemis writes nice verses in the popular language with a good deal of taste and in perfect rhythm. He is fond of fairy-tales, of fairies and dragons, and knows well how to mould his ideas into fine pictures, like that with which the *Gems* are prologued. But the fact is that sometimes we cannot see for ourselves what idea underlies a metaphor. For instance, when in the *Μαγεμένο πετράδι* (" Enchanted stone ") he depicts a black stone as having the qualities of the cestus of the Venus and as being buried by its possessor's maidservant after her death. We cannot really understand : why this loss ?

But Polemis is often successful in gratifying his reader with the simple couching of easy perceptions and notions. In the elegant demotic language and verse of Polemis many really popular ideas find expression. There are many such poems to be found in his productions, and his *Πρῶτα βήματα* (" First Steps "), written for little children, bring out this point to the utmost.

* * *

We have now finished with the poets of Athens who have

been honoured by the State. But there are still many others—for instance, the enthusiastic Georgios Strategis, Miltiades Malakassis, who writes in the melancholy strain of thought, Lambros Porphyras of the pondering mind, and Anghelos Sikelianos. There are also the younger poets, all teeming with hope and nearly as numerous as they were in the very same town many centuries ago, when they drew forth the sharp raillery of Aristophanes. But Aristophanes was wrong. Youth should always be encouraged and praised.

In Constantinople there was, before the recent wars, a group worthy of honourable mention, among whom John Gryparis and Anghelos Semiriotis were the most distinguished, the latter having edited for some time and published the "*Φιλολογικὴ Ἠχώ*" ("Literary Echo"). Gryparis, who is a very able philologist, has translated Aeschylus and has written some incomparable Sonnets.

In Smyrna, Michael Argyropoulos, the translator of Saadi's *Giolistan*, was a remarkable poet. He wrote various patriotic poems under the pen-name of *Ῥήγας Ῥαγιᾶς* (enslaved Rigas).

Outside Greece there excel in England the two well-known demoticists, Argyris Eftaliotis, the Lesbian translator of Shelley, who is better known as a story-writer, and Lekas Arvanitis (Al. Pallis), the translator of Homer's *Iliad*, who wrote the graceful *Τραγουδάκια γιὰ Παιδιά* ("Songs for Children"). There still remain the Alexandrine poets headed by Kavafis, a symbolic poet. They publish two fine magazines, the *Γράμματα* ("Letters") and the *Νεά Ζωή* ("New Life"). A new Alexandrine school is thus created by young poets who have an advantage that was not common to Theocritus—wealth.

The living Greek poets, therefore, are numerous. During the last three or four decades very great progress has been made. The legacy of Solomos and his Ionian successors has enriched the poetic shelves. Athens and some good agencies have been established in Constantinople and abroad. European literature is followed attentively,

literary taste is being perfected, a poetic language is being shaped and, what ranks above all, a public is being educated willing to read and buy books. Quite recently second editions of poetical volumes have been printed within the first year of their issue—that is to say, a record.

The stage is also making progress; the acting is now much better to what it was before; two actresses may be singled out for their art. It should be added that the theatre-going public now knows and understands more.

The same advancement is noticed in music. Not only have we composers but—what is still more important—we have got the concert-public. In the first years of King George's reign the poets and the other artists were left by the public indifference to vegetate. But everything is nowadays much better. The State has placed nearly every man of letters and has founded the Prize already spoken of. That this is contested for with such a pitch of emulation is already a very good omen. *Ἀγαθὴ δ' ἔρις ἥδε βροτοῖσι.*

A good deal of discussion goes on over the language question, but, fortunately, everybody is agreed with regard to poetry on the principle laid down by Solomos, although not, of course, in every detail. The final outcome does not appear to be in view; we have still much to discuss and to wrangle over many a jot and apostrophe.

And now, if you ask me: Has a national art then been created in Greece? I shall reply: It *is* really being created. And I hasten to explain myself:

A poem of Drossinis, set to music by Samaras, a poem of Palamas set to music by Kalomoires, and a comedy of Xenopoulos played by Cybelé, is something that can be heard and applauded in any capital and by any circle of men in Europe. And that is enough. For instance, it may be safely asserted that Signor d'Annunzio is no greater a poet than Palamas.

Certainly neither poetry nor story, which is also a poetical species, has attained in Greece that admirable bloom of Russian literature, which after having portrayed the Russian national types exalted itself to philosophical heights. We still employ our art in depicting our native

country, sometimes even our compatriots and we are all looking forward to an ideal Greece—which we can hardly discern yet.

The unification of Greece: this is the principal anxiety of our poets, both the younger and the older and regardless of rank. This is surely to their credit. But to a general nsight into the whole idea of Hellenism, as it has been evolving in the course of thirty centuries and throughout its great triumphs and its great disasters, only one had the power to raise himself, Palamas. But in the realm of those sublime heights where Aeschylus and Pindar have their usual point of view, we have but mere attempts. It is still very early. Then if the question is again put to me: Is it probable that we shall again reach those regions, that we shall create new masterpieces, remarkable in number and greatness, and worthy of the Greek name? I shall reply: Yes, it is not improbable.

And I rest my hopes on this: That Greeks have at their disposal almost everything required—a language superbly rich and a religion of their own and by means of them they are the inheritors of two vast civilizations—the ancient, which we have but superficially excavated until to-day, and the Byzantine, a real treasure, which still lies before us untouched. Then we have the poetry of the Frankish years, a veritable faerie, the brilliant poetry of Crete (1500-1650), and—last, but not least—we have the most pliant and plastic folk poetry. Then the great inspiration, which is the manifestation of a nation's physical force, will sooner or later come, too, to render once more illustrious the holy name of Hellas.

SIMOS MENARDOS.

Our good friend and Vice-President, Miss Mary Coles Carrington, of Richmond, Virginia, has been awarded the Mary Selden Gillmor Lyric Prize offered through the Poetry Society of Virginia. The judges were the Editor and Associate Editor of *The Century Magazine* and the Poetry Editor of *The Forum*. Miss Carrington is a contributor to leading magazines and is the author of the Poe poem which hangs on the wall of the Poe shrine in Richmond, Va.

THE POET SOUL: Part II

Amongst the men and cities of this globe he wanders ever a restless stranger, feeling always his alienage, for between his being and its relation to all else, and the connection of common men to all within their lives, there is an unbridgeable chasm that stamps him as of foreign allegiances and strange, un-understandable emotions.

He speaks the cosmic tongue and the sailings of the clouds; the birth and death of races and planets; the nights and days, are his comings and goings.

Oh! how do these others despise and plot against their wholly different brother in whom, as though some gleam of his mystic intelligence were momentarily lent them for them, to see, they perceive their superior and mankind's rarest qualities.

The privacy, the much desired and sought-for distinction and disparateness from the mass—the common run of men, the true individuality, this rare, different, particularity which is but a synonym for eccentricity whether the expression of it partakes of noble forms or otherwise, for which other men so bitterly contest and strive to be and have, is showered, as from a gushing horn of plenty, upon the Poet-Soul. He finds himself, surprised and diffident, the favoured beneficiary of a rich, bounteous and golden dower, tossed into his modest lap by some passing monarch who, while charioteering across the skies, saw him far below, and, pleased to note Divine reflection, tossed him a crumb of Infinity's loaf. His the genuine distinction; his the real individuality, for between him, the Poet-Soul, and the world of men living across an unnavigable sea, will ever exist a cleft of life unbridgeable; an alienage of tongues; a difference in all being, so vast as to be never fused together in common aims and feelings and relations to the world. Some mighty stroke has rent mankind in twain! He is the owner of the Holy Grail and, as in the legend, his divine legacy will disappear and vanish if approached by any but its rightful keeper. For men do not seem to know that in their omnipresent quest after individuality, the striving itself brands them as all alike.

Whereas the Poet-Soul proceeding quietly, surely, almost carelessly, upon his chosen way, indifferent to life and men and their pigmy turbulences, becomes the most profoundly individual, the most distinctly disparate being known to men. He tries not and succeeds; he contests not and wins—"The first shall be last and the last shall be first."

For in the Poet-Soul's glorious field as in the sphere of goodness there can be, by dictate of natural law, no competition, no strife, no contest bitterly fought for gain as in the common marts. In his realm of endeavour no cunning or fortuitous concourse of accidental circumstances, no power of influence or private design, no crafty and illicit route created to reach the goal o'er lesser ground, can deprive the rightful owner of the crown and place its sterling form on sly and interloping heads in which resides no true capacity, none but devilish scheming and shrewd devices of artifice and craft. Herein a man is what he is worth, and thus the world, viewing no opportunity for sly contrivance, perceiving no chance to substitute for the gold of natural wit or powers acquired only through might and toil an alloy of expedient imposture and contrivance, has cast the entire matter out as a pastime of pedants that is nothing significant. But the sphere with silent roar proclaims itself as right and just; trumpets its truth and primality with thunderous tones of rationality and the ears and eyes of men too just to cheat, regardless of their own accomplishments, shall hear and see and they shall say, "This is the First!"

For all who enter upon this activity no confining track presents itself whereon man pits himself against man, one race, one course, a single prize to gain. Here there is no confinement, no restriction. It is a race of minds; no given goal; no objective prize that once is won all effort is restrained. For when birds fly, the sky is the course and the last will arrive at the perch, not defeated, but a winner at having landed. Time, speed, or place shall have no part, but only the flight itself amidst the thoughts and pages of the world shall mark the contestant.

The Poet-Soul finds himself! He stands awed and

a-wonder, eternally inspired with that same reverential fear that dawns when tiny men, with senses fully awakened and minds for a fleeting moment attuned in proper proportion and correspondence to the universal phenomena, fall back aghast, humbled and overwhelmed as they stand at night and view the firmament. Something akin to this engulfing wave of solemn dread, this nauseating sensation of horrible feebleness and nonentityism, at once coupled with profound adoration, marvel, and respect, throbs always within the Poet-Soul. A little child at its first circus! But the Poet-Soul finds himself and in the discovery he is both appalled and strengthened, dismayed and joyous, fearful and serene, awed and courageous. And this revelation he has is for him alone; other men do not experience it, he alone lives ever active in the thought. Were other men just passingly to pay this mighty of the mighties any heed, not much attention would they think it worth and hurrying on to things of tin and steel would pass by and mock the gold. These, too, who *see* and scoff, are but the few. Sadder still, the multitude sleeps on, *utterly* unawakened. A flaming torch is pressed against their wicks, but there is no ignition. The heavens shout to man; man is a sloth asleep. But in this quiet, dark, slumbering world, far up in the look-out tower of Thought, the Poet-Soul, awakened and tense, stares out and sees the mighty and trembles.

The Poet-Soul finds himself! But his discovery other men would deem of not much worth. Thus he is the Poet-Soul; they, men. He sees the wondrous sight; he hears the marvellous sound; he feels the mighty throb which other men shall never know, for he sees and hears and feels not with eyes and ears and touch, but by his coveted instrument, the Poet-Soul. He is astonished at the sweet of the cosmic play and shudders at its great, majestic awfulness. He crouches as if to avoid the planets as they hum on their terrible way and trembles at the crash of stars, the fires of inconceivable suns, the madness of universal dimensions, the spinning, dashing on of the frightful universal machine. Then, utterly dismayed and weak, he wonders at its cause and purpose! One more

step, but with this he goes almost insane with the wild infinitude of his devastating thoughts as utterly dazzled and afraid, he dares to think of the MAKER! He reads the philosophic text, " first Cause uncaused " and cannot dream of worlds without their start, yet even more insane is " endlessness."

He plunges into the abyss of the terrible problems reserved for none but he, and with some sort of sacred courage loaned him he pounds at the portal of Enigma; the dark chasms gape, and he draws his sword of Reason and Faith and gives his life in combat with the enemy other men trouble not with even a challenge or regard. In this he recognizes the true battle and goes forth singing. Into the dark profundities of abstraction and pure thought, he marches on. Up the insane steeps of these sublimities, the peaks of human vision and speculation, he climbs dauntlessly. But he halts not for he bears company: Plotinus, Swedenborg, Pascal, and Emerson are with him! See! There is Plato ahead there hewing the precipitous way!

As Hugo says, he lives in " those prodigious questions which attract and terrify, the unfathomable perspectives of the abstract, the precipices of metaphysics, all those depths which for the apostle converge in God, for the atheist in nothingness; destiny, good and evil, the war of being against being, human consciousness, the pensive somnambulism of the animal, transformation through death, the recapitulation of existences which the grave contains, the incomprehensible grafting of successive loves on the enduring ME, essence, substance, the Nil and Ens nature, liberty necessity; in a word . . . all the gloomy precipices over which the gigantic archangels of the human mind bend, the formidable abysses which Lucretius, Manon, St. Paul and Dante contemplate with that flashing eye which seems, in regarding Infinity, to make stars sparkle in it.

" However this may be, there are in the world men—are they men?—who distinctly perceive on the horizon of dreamland the heights of the Absolute and have the terrible vision of the Mountain of the Infinite."

And this is the glory of Man.

The Poet-Soul finds himself! The mighty macrocosmic pulse beats on and within him is re-echoed; microcosmically reproduced; and in the throbbing mysteriously within him he fearfully and joyously recognizes the epitome of the universal pulsation. Through this beat he comes to know and feel his rapport to the whole; learns through this strange, wild, harmony that this beating consonancy pronounces in solemn tones his marriage to the world and whispers in his breast that only in quantity is he different from the life and purpose of the Universe in its entirety, the World-being; in quality he is of it; a bit of it; the same. Thus in our Poet-Souls have we strange and marvellous creatures amongst us, wondrously and fearfully composed, that assure us that the "Great Life" and "All-Being" has aim and purpose; our promise, let us thank whatever Powers there be, has been given; and in the Christ and Buddha and Moses, no less than in our Plato and Shakespeare, our beloved Kant and Emerson, has the Universal-Being, all that *Is* even beyond our farthest dreams and feelings, guaranteed that the awful tragedy and futility of being, the sinful devastation and sorrow of existence, may be but a mistaken dream of our finite, erring minds; that man may yet ally himself with the ever-living, all-wise final being. We are not lost!

The Poet-Soul finds himself! With tremor he sits in the transcendental theatre and sees the curtain of mundanity arise away and reveal the great Celestial play; the true drama of the Ultimate and Real. Other men have forgotten to bring their glasses and cannot see. Great God, if you exist, turn on the lights! for humanity is dark and stumbling and our torches are so few.

The play proceeds, but the audience mistakes the secular costumes and temporal scenery for the actors themselves, the true meaning of the show. Behind the mundane trappings is the eternal play, the meaning of Life it aims to portray; the scenery has but been painted with worldly colours so as to speak the language of men that they might, first of all, understand; but men have misunderstood the stains for the picture itself.

The Poet-Soul has understood the end and not mistaken the means for the goal. Men *live in* the striving and believe the mere travelling is the end of the trip itself; the Poet-Soul sees the journey as merely to gain the purpose. The great secret has he discovered; that the aim and final destination of life and thus the divination of the purpose of life and mankind is not far off at the end of a tortuous, stony trail through ebon vales of forest, struggle, and rivalry. The strife is absurd; other men cannot vie with the Poet-Soul to gain his goal first and cause him to struggle to defend it, labour to reach it priorly and stake his claim; for he has it within him, away from the grasping talons of competition where none can hope to wrest it from him. Hail the conqueror! He has defeated a world of men! Safe in his haven with his prize; but his gold was never in jeopardy! It is his own inner light!

"When I acquire riches I will rest and meditate, learn the wisdom of the world, study the Sages and dream great dreams of God and Life's purpose." Hear the human tragedy! The journey mistaken for the Goal! Not the "comedy of errors" but the tragedy! What a debt the Poet-Soul owes to his Poet-Soul! Are we not blessed for having eyes?

The Poet-Soul, too, has travelled, but his journey has been through rosaries; a pilgrimage of joy and delight along a road where the light grows ever brighter with learning, understanding, and wondrous feeling. At the pistol shot he has stood still, refused to run as the other racers dashed off down the cinder path of commerce. Alone, a still, forsaken figure, ridiculed because he failed to start, yet in runner's garb, like the others in every outward aspect, he cries aloud, pointing to a goal of Mind and Soul.

"But that is not the path we race, it is *this* way!"

The others scoff and flash away.

Thus in the mundane contest he is left far behind, to win the Greater Race. *His* cinder path stretches from Thales to Spencer, from Homer to Shaw, and none can crowd him out. His racing is a joy and as he speeds by each milepost he gains strength and endurance; he tries not, for the

longer the race the sturdier, surer, and more exhilarated he becomes. Constant second-winds are given him; he glides along swiftly, free, unhampered as the lofty flight of a bird high in the thin air, unrestricted and light. A single trophy he fails to earn, but the delight of winning a prize is incessantly recurring within him; thus the flush of victory he constantly enjoys; the victory that none can deprive him of; no decision rendered against him makes of him the loser, for he has won! The medal is he!

Men discuss worldly affairs while he wonders what is the meaning of all life. Men shed false tears at the biers of worthless friends and relatives as he probes what is the message death conveys. Men make gay at marriages as he stands to marvel at the phenomenon of sex and love. Men hurry and scurry for coins and cloth while he fathoms what here on earth can be worth while. He rises above it all as a bird soars above a battle of the ants and at man's ceaseless, futile strivings and contests he marvels, appalled, at the veil draped so impenetrably before their visions. Men journey to and fro while he speculates upon the courses of heedless planets whirling on inexplicable journeys through spaces horrifying. Men gaze with awe at finite distances here composed of land and sea while he shudders at the thought of infinite regions. Men applaud the wisdom of the sciences, respect the cunning and ability of acquisition, while he becomes astounded at the mystery of consciousness and thought, the grandeur of ideas, the enigma of memory. Men strut about mere action's stage, prize their mortal compositions, and flaunt the progress and greatness of human ingenuity, while he sits, humbled and meek, dreaming of a Maker founding worlds and sees the humour of insects quarrelling and vaunting, claiming and praising, disputing and owning, priding and scorning other wretched mites under the shadow of a great heel that could stamp out all the ludicrous play with mere caprice.

He possesses that free universality of conception which allows him to make an abstract principle the object of consciousness, and more, to this wholly nascent and nebulous law, still uncertain as to its fruits, he is able, due to

some divine immutable conviction and assurance, to dedicate his concrete performances, deeds and substantial qualities. He possesses a consciousness of Thought itself and of its forms, which is isolated, as it were, from any particular object, which men divine and learned will assure you is man's particular crown, his unique glory, his distinguishing gift, his highest achievement, his mightiest power; the phenomenon, above all else, that proclaims such man a wondrous being, a strange supernal something, for this is the rarest of gifts.

His tongue is strangely given to the language of universals; he cannot see the burning of a tinder for starlight arrests his gaze. He cannot compete in the marts when his lungs cry for the cool, verdant-laden breezes that blow o'er the mountains and forests. He cannot strive for gold while he is striving for thought, and to this has some hidden, supermundane priest wedded him in solemn tones for he has heard within his breast.

The Poet-Soul has traded and he both lost and gained. Ever will he be sad, shrouded with a calm despair, and mourning, but in turn for this lofty morbidity which is his onus, he has received the elation and joy of a strange, magnificent melancholy, the serenest, the highest, the most beautiful, for it is born of profundity. The World has been taken; the heavens have been given. The senses have gone; heart, soul and mind have come. Of this France has said:

> Those who have tasted this profound and lofty sorrow will never exchange it for the frivolous gaieties and vain hopes of the vulgar.

Infinity, Universality, and Futility laden his brow with a melancholy wealth in which he finds greater joys than the most ecstatic pleasures of the world. He is alone, above, and his being cannot be compromised.

What then is our Poet-Soul, a mad, mystic raving with the infinitude of his thoughts; a dreamer of ethereal dreams; a poet in the baser sense, a droner of evanescent musings; an impractical, visionary fancier of great, empty, supernal ideas?

The Poet-Soul has seen and dreams of the time when other men shall see. Did not all the bold achievers dream their dreams, even frothy and follysome, before they gave birth to the son of the idea, the mighty new advance? He dreams as Christ dreamt, and as Columbus, Franklin, and Edison. Of all his thoughts the one he would impart to every ear is that of the futility of contest, strife, and gain. He has seen by a light that God has lit that these are nothing worth and in his realm of study, thought, and goodness the Infinite has pointed out the treasure of true wealth; the wealth of human good, placidity, and knowledge.

The most practical, useful message of all Time have the ears of the Poet-Soul grasped from the secret drawers of the universe. Secretly and almost inaudibly was this ponderous tiding, so delicate and faint as to be unheard by all but he, sweeping about discursively in the infinite regions. To that rare, soft whispering he attuned the whole apparatus of his spirit; he strained to glean the great tidings and, lo! the fine wires of his being caught up the elusive and divine truth and he has deciphered it and passed it on to obtuse men.

And the message that he has had shown him is *the true succession of things in life;* his greater gaze, his deeper introspection, his more subtle and accurate perception has read the writing on the wall of the universe which defines true order; from this super-physical eptitude of marking the rational sequence of interests, qualities, facts, ideas, and objects he has more truly caught the meaning and greater significance; he has deciphered the universal message, always intended for man to know but which was esoterically conceived.

Due to a relation to the world of a greater, broader, universal character and stamp, he has been enabled to read the greater, broader, universal code; he has seen more truly than we. Emerson said:

> As the eyes of Lynæus were said to see through the earth, so the Poet turns the world to glass, and shows us all the things in their right series and procession. For through that better perception he stands one step nearer to things, and sees the flowing and metamorphosis.

And where with our limited, narrow sight we see but only the scope of which our gaze is capable, hence a finite view is had by men, conditioned and made insular, cramped and dwarfed to a like degree with their own narrow and limited understandings, the Poet-Soul, free, unconditioned and unlimited, a bit of universality, is enabled to see, not all, not the entire view, but such a generous part is brought before his greater glass that to him we must turn and from him learn the printing that is too afar for us to read. He is our telescope; a little boy perhaps not near so rich or strong or big but with *sight* leading a blind man. He reads the message meant for all men, received by but a few, and passes it on to that majority groping in the dark, oft-times unwilling to heed or believe.

He has grasped things in the larger, genuine, cosmic, if we must say it, order of their importance; he sees what we cannot see; he feels what we cannot feel; he hears and knows what we cannot hear and know, emotions and prescience are his that we could never own though the Gods themselves decreed.

This is his chief faculty, his one ability and power that makes him the offspring of the universal and supernal, removes him apart from all other men, almost a different species. He has had given him the language of the Greater, the truly High, the genuinely Important and we, blinded by a web of false proportion and an erroneous order of importance, the ants beneath the heel, cannot see the real significance, the authentically important, what is purely significant, weighty, and of worth, either of our thoughts, our actions or our aims.

And the product of this gift, this supermundane discernment, he passes on to us; the Poet-Soul's contribution to mankind and its progress. Even were the race of men entirely thus enabled to understand, it is this way perhaps better; for the blinding weight and stupendousness of such unalloyed truths, facts universal, that it is his wont to learn and receive, would dismay other men and scare away their possession of themselves so that the messages would, through terror, be distorted.

He sees the cosmic sweep, as Heraclitus ; no things come and stay ! And thus he learns the first great lesson of the Poet-Soul ! the secret we have entitled " Futility," but it is not really this although at once it is. The futility of all the strivings and events, things and possessions, works and legacies, wealth and even of life are to the Poet-Soul's gaze a revelation. So then as Spinoza, he seeks to find the Universal Good, the One, that is more lasting, imbued with greater permanence, not so subject to the sad, perpetual flow.

Thus, to the accompaniment of the disbelieving uproar and sceptical scoffing of lower men, the Poet-Soul brings forth, a seer, his first great truth, the counsel that we promised heretofore would become the most practical ; he tells us that the Universe is Wise, ruled and directed by a Wisdom so great that men cannot conceive it ; so mighty as to turn them into trembling stone, were they to guess this Truth. Thus learning and study, the sweet serenity and calm abundance, contentment and the satisfaction state that blooms with understanding and mental acquisition is the First, and brings man nearest to any Unchangeable, any True, that can be here below. Why ? because the Faulty must always strive to imitate the Perfect ; the Lesser to be like the Great ; the Weak like the Strong. The Part must inevitably tend toward the Whole and Man, the tiniest fraction of it all, must model himself after the Greater Scheme of which he is a mite. Thus *it is his* to be. The Wisdom of the Universe his pattern, he must strive to copy and share his just proportion so that all the Infinites will not, by their one, unworthy, slothful son, be made to hide their faces in shame and say, in whispered scorn, " He is Our lone, black Sheep," and, saying this, point the awful, accusing finger at Man !

As a Colossus with an axe, the Poet-Soul shatters our preconceived ideas, he reproves our greed, throws down our altars of so-called " advancement " and " civilization," destroys our smug notions of gain and happiness ; annihilates our systems and manners and demolishes our house of cards called wealth. In their places he puts wisdom and

study, love and friendship, calm and a placid peace of still contentment.

For urban, he writes, with cosmic chalk, suburban; for competition, co-operation; for lust, love; for gold, wisdom; for strife and contest, rest and thought; for hurry, meditation; for poverty, brotherhood; for finite, tinselled thoughts of cloth and pleasure, the mighty ideas that will always hold the greatest amongst men. In truth, he tears away from beneath all, all this falseness and hands us the radiant unalloyed.

The Portals of the Poet-Soul will always stand with tender, outstretched arms offering peace and comfort to the driven, the weary, the tired, and if they strive to find the key and disparage not, they may conquer, for who knows what mighty thing within him slumbers. And above its sheltering, merciful portals let man chisel this paraphrase of Dante's immortal line: "All ye who Enter here May Start to Hope."

Some there are,
By their good works exalted, lofty minds
And meditative, authors of delight
And happiness, which to the end of end
Will live, and spread, and kindle."

WORDSWORTH.

The air is full of their voices. Their books are the world's holiday and playground, and into these neither care, nor the dun, nor despondency can follow the enfranchised man.

DREAMTHORP.

J. CHARLES DAVIS.

WHEN I DO WALK

WHEN I do walk in solitude
My heart puts on a joyful tone;
My mind with pleasant thoughts is strewed
When I do walk in solitude,
And vanishes each fretful mood—
For with myself I am alone.
When I do walk in solitude
My heart puts on a joyful tone.

HUGH B. COTT.

DYNAMICS OF AMERICAN POETRY : XIX

MISS EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY's last book of poetry (*The Buck in the Snow and Other Poems ;* Harpers, 1928) contains much expression that is beautiful. She is beloved for her love of life and a rare gift of the telling of it.

The passing of summer is a favourite threnody with the poets. Miss Millay adds the following " Song " :

Gone, gone again is Summer the lovely.
  She that knew not where to hide,
Is gone again like a jewelled fish from the hand,
  Is lost on every side.

Mute, mute, I make my way to the garden,
  Thither where she last was seen;
The heavy foot of the frost is on the flags there,
  Where her light step has been.

Gone, gone again is Summer the lovely,
  Gone again on every side,
Lost again like a shining fish from the hand
  Into the shadowy tide.

There is the frequent note of loss in the book—it belongs in mood with Miss Teasdale's *Dark of the Moon* and John Hall Wheelock's *Bright Doom*.

In a poem, " To a Friend Estranged from Me," there is a lively pen-picture of Pride,

That this could be !
That I should live to see
Most vulgar Pride, that stale obstreperous clown,
So fitted out with purple robe and crown
To stand among his betters !

In " Anguish," poignant is the sense of sorrow,

I would to God I were quenched and fed
As in my youth
From the flask of song, and the good bread
Of beauty richer than truth.

The anguish of the world is on my tongue,
The bowl is filled to the brim with it ; there is more than I can eat.
Happy are the toothless old and the toothless young,
That cannot rend this meat.

And in the " Dirge Without Music," is a cry,

I am not resigned to the shutting away of loving hearts in the hard ground.
* * * They are gone. They are gone to feed the roses,
Elegant and curled
Is the blossom. Fragrant is the blossom. I know,
But I do not approve.
More precious was the light in your eyes than all the roses of the world.

Very lovely poetry is " Memory of Cassis " :

Do you recall how we sat by the smokily-burning
Twisted odorous trunk of the olive-tree
* * * And the deep white dust of the broad road leading outward
To a world forgotten, between the dusty almonds and the dusty vines ?

Miss Millay's gift of portraiture gives her poetry an immediateness and realism. Her poems are addressed to very definite personalities, etched clear by her power of description, as in the following from " To a Musician " :

* * * Who, now, under the yellow willows at the water's edge
Closes defeated lips upon the trivial word unspoken,
And lifts her soft eyes freighted with a heavy pledge
To your eyes empty of pledges, even of pledges broken.

One is constrained to ask of Miss Elinor Wylie, with such a power of writing, why, O why, so trivial ? With such a power of writing ! ! ! I like to find these lines in the " Dedication " (*Trivial Breath ;* Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1928) :

* * * Into the hungry coffin and beyond it
A single uncorrupted drop of youth
Must live in elegy upon my lips
When I and chaos shall have come to grips.

and in the next two from " Speed the Parting " :

* * * Though luminous things are mould
They survive in a glance that crossed them,

the student of the soul shall we say, becomes aware that it is not all so trivial in his mind as Miss Wylie's title suggests. " The Innocent Landscape " illustrates the author's talent for spiritual gymnastics,

Here is no peace, although the air has fainted,
And footfalls die and are buried in deep grass,
And reverential trees are softly painted
Like saints upon an oriel of glass.

The pattern of the atmosphere is spherical,
A bubble in the silence of the sun,
Blown thinner by the very breath of miracle
Around a core of loud confusion.

Here is no virtue; here is nothing blessèd
Save the foredoomed suspension of the end;
Faith is the blossom, but the fruit is cursèd;
Go hence, for it is useless to pretend.

Good stories in ballad form are to be found in this last book, and an all too short notice cannot compass the wit and wisdom of it ending with a sonnet, "False Prophet":

When I was forty, and two feathers sprung
Like crescents silver-curved from either temple,
Above a casque of bronze, I saw the simple
And casual shape of beauty; and my tongue
Spoke thus: "I am rejoiced I am not young
Lest this supreme and ultimate example
Of fine spun flesh should very lightly trample
Upon my wounds; my withers are unwrung."

He might have been my son, save that my youth,
Being the slender bow of its despair,
Loosed no such luminous arrow on the air;
His shaft was cut from some diviner bough:
And while my fainting heart perceived the truth,
My tongue spoke thus: "He cannot hurt me now."

Louis Untermeyer's *Burning Bush* (Harcourt Brace & Co., New York, 1928), like the other two here reviewed, carries the sense of finality of a going down of winds and suns. A tragic sorrow has visited this poet since the world has met him and this last poem speaks his burning hope!

And suddenly the flowing night stands still
And the loose air grows tense and small;
Runners of flame from nowhere rise and fill
The narrowest veins, till all

The martyrdom of fire is not enough
For bodies eager to be doomed;
Burning in one long agony of love,
Burning but not consumed.

And the last white blaze from our being's core
And flesh, too shaken to rejoice,
Cries out till quiet, vaster than before,
Speaks in the still, small voice.

In *The Winged Horse* (Doubleday Page & Co., 1928), Joseph Auslander and Ernest Hill have done us a splendid service. In the fine fire of the love of their task and knowledge this book was wrought. In it are summoned from the amphitheatre of time the master-riders of Pegasus and without pride or prejudice or patronage are made one's friends, bound with them in an everlasting friendship!

So thoroughly and generously have these writers accomplished this that one finds oneself in the frame of mind in which one half believes Homer, Virgil, Dante, Petrarch, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, might drop in for lunch or dinner or tea, or for one of the precious late communions when there is a sitting about at the table of thought in the atmosphere of a kind of divine content!

Without rhetoric or redundance the pages tell the brilliant tale and with gorgeous reserve the tellers never break the continuity by overstressing or any stumbling. Indeed the book inaugurates a new order of the telling of an almost impossibly-long story for one volume *in one volume.*

Taking the book west, for review, on a holiday trip on the beautiful private pullman car, Henry Stanley, for a first look at the American Continent, it proved a stimulating experience—the acceleration of the wheels of physical locomotion together with the acceleration of mental wheels engendered by "the Winged Horse!" In New Orleans, in Houston, in Laredo, in the Texas desert, in Los Angeles, in Santa Barbara, in San Francisco, the Grand Canyon, Chicago, what fine company this book provided!

These young writers, Auslander and Hill, bring a fine equipment to their purpose. Joseph Auslander, born in Philadelphia in 1897, graduated with honours from Harvard and was appointed to teach English Composition and Literature at Harvard and Radcliffe. Later he did graduate work in English at Harvard, and was sent abroad as a Parker Travelling Fellow to pursue graduate studies at the Sorbonne (University of Paris). He was for a time Editor of *The Measure.* At present he is poetry reviewer for the *New York World* and the *New York Sun.* He is the author of two volumes of Poetry—*Sunrise Trumpets* (Harpers, 1924), and *Cyclops' Eye* (Harpers, 1926). He won the Blindman Prize for Poetry in 1924, and was the winner of the Illusion Sonnet Contest of THE POETRY REVIEW, at about that same time.

Frank Ernest Hill was born in San Jose, California, in 1888. He holds the degree of A.B. and A.M. from Stanford University. For five years he taught in the University of Illinois, Stanford and Columbia Extension. He was Fellow in English at Columbia, 1917-18, but left to join the army. He served in the aviation, flying for six months.

Later he joined the editorship staff of the *New York Globe*, and was book editor of the *New York Sun*, 1924-25. He was one of the founders of *The Measure*. His poetry has appeared in *The New Republic*, *The Nation*, *The Commonweal*, and other leading magazines.

We may say in the parlance of to-day they have proved themselves in this journey of the mind through minds with minds veritable Lindberghs. Never academic or professorial they guide their readers with their own unerring enjoyment in the proven beauty of the great riders and make one know it to be one of life's great privileges to touch even the hem of the garment of Poetry. It is a book for the years and all ages!

Let us read some of Mr. Auslander's translations:

Speaking of Horace, he says, "Horace wrote also of the joys of the simple life. In fact, few have written so charmingly of it before or since. He sat among his grapes and books, he dreamed under dark trees beside singing water, and celebrated the riches of the spirit at peace with the world. Let others hunt for power, chase chimeras, worry about beauty and pleasure":

> For me, the poet's ivy is very heaven:
> Me the cool woods wet with dewy even,
> Where Nymphs and Satyrs frolic now shut in
> From the polluted rabble and their din,
> So let Euterpe's breath revive my reed
> And Polyhymnia string my lute at need.
> Oh, write me with the lyric choir, and I
> With my proud head shall bump against the sky!

From pages given to Virgil, "Rhyme Virgil never used, and his metre was different from ours, but something of the colour and spirit and tenderness of his verse may come in these lines about an aged shepherd":

> Happy old man! So will your land be yours and enough
> Though the marsh streak the pastures with slime and flinty stuff
> Be everywhere. Still no alien fodder will touch your little
> Tottering ewes, and no contagion. Oh, happy here the brittle
> Hedge whose willow-blossoms, browsed by Hybla's bees,
> Will whisper you to sleep; there the sweet mysteries
> Of water, the streams you know so well, the sacred springs;
> From here, under that tall stone's curve, the dresser sings
> Out into the air—while your hoarse wood-pigeons and white doves
> Will go on murmuring the inconsolable alto of their loves.

Of Petrarch we read, "He returned to Avignon. He saw Laura on the street. There was that same terrific stare of recognition. As she went by, his knees trembled beneath him, havoc was in his heart, and

a fiery weakness. He leaned against a pillar to keep from falling. That night he poured his soul out in a sonnet. Love had conquered":

O straying steps! O blind and busy dreams!
O constant memory! O keen desire!
O passion strong! Heart weak with its own fire!
O eyes, not eyes, but salt and living streams!
O laurel boughs whose fluent garland seems
Guerdon enough to which lords may aspire!
O haunted life! Mirage I must admire
Or wallow else in little sluggard schemes!
O glamorous face, where Love has hoarded well
His lash and spur to prick the heart and move
The mind at will; nor heart nor mind to spare!
O spirits consumed with love, if yet you dwell
Upon this earth, and you, great Ghosts of Love,
Pause and observe my passion, my despair!

Of Keats, "Perhaps Keats was the purest poet that ever lived. That he might have done finer things than he did in his horribly brief twenty-five years, had he been spared, is not the point. What he did remains, for utter felicity and natural magic, unparalleled—with the exception only of Shakespeare. But he was no more Elizabethan than he was Greek. He was Keatsian. No other adjective can coin him. If you have capacity for the enjoyment of beauty on beauty's own terms, if you be made of penetrable stuff, you will drink deep of Keats, you will find him the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

In condemnation of the present in poetry, Auslander uses a deserved and stinging whip.

We who were prophets and priest-men
For the Kings of the East and the East-men,
The bugles of God to the beast-men,
His terrible seal on our brow—
Physicians of music and makers
Of language and law and the breakers
Of battle, strength-lifters, heart-shakers—
We are nice poets now.

And we sip cups of tea, nibble crumpets,
And we celebrate ninnies and strumpets,
While the rust bites the throat of the trumpets
And the ram's horn hangs on the wall;
And the fifes of the Lord are polluted
With the melodies tickled and tooted
Out of the stops that once fluted
Tall silver songs for King Saul.

Turning to Mr. Auslander's book of poems, *Sunrise Trumpets*, we find a volume full of beauty. As with bright silver arrows he pins each shining word in the perfect pattern of his delight. The servants of his desire are songs that float out on the air, giving the listeners the sense of sure possession of his dreams. In its entirety I am giving "Home Bound"—

The moon rims the wavering tide where one fish slips,
The water makes a quietness of sound,
Night is an anchoring of many ships
Home-bound.

There are strange tunnellers in the dark, and whirs
Of wings that die, and fairy spiders spin
The silence into nets, and tenanters
Move softly in.

I step on shadows gliding through the grass
And feel the night lean cool against my face;
And challenged by the sentinel of space—
I pass.

and, "I Know it Will be Quiet When You Come."

I know it will be quiet when you come:
No wind; the water breathing steadily;
A light like ghost of silver on the sea;
And the surf dreamily fingering his drum.
Twilight will drift in large and leave me numb
With nearness to the last tranquillity;
And then the slow and languorous tyranny
Of orange moon, pale night, and cricket hum.

And suddenly there will be twist of tide,
A rustling as of thin silk on the sand,
The tremor of a presence at my side,
The tremble of a hand upon my hand:
And pulses sharp with pain, and fires fanned,
And words that stumble into stars and hide.

We find in this collection the very good sea picture, "Gray Mother," which Mr. Auslander entered in the Sea Sonnet Contest, and for which he gained commendation.

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT.

AN AMERICAN CLASSIC'S PARALLELS!

IT is a common saying that every person has the material within for one good novel. Some of us attain to that one. Fewer still have written one poem which has become a classic. In England we could mention Joseph Blanco White with his sonnet *To Night and Death*. It would be surprising if any editor in England or America were to publish those lines under some other name as original, or even a paraphrase of them.

Yet America has produced one classic, quoted in England but so little known as to have been both plagiarized and paraphrased within the last twenty years.

What American has not heard the lines of *Fate*?

"Two shall be born the whole wide world apart,
And speak in different tongues, and have no thought
Each of the other's being, and no heed;
And these, o'er unknown seas to unknown lands
Shall cross, escaping wreck, defying death,
And all unconsciously shape every act
And bend each wandering step to this one end—
That, one day, out of darkness, they shall meet
And read life's meaning in each other's eyes.

"And two shall walk some narrow way of life
So nearly side by side, that should one turn
Ever so little space to left or right
They needs must stand acknowledged face to face.
And yet, with wistful eyes that never meet,
With groping hands that never clasp, and lips
Calling in vain to ears that never hear,
They seek each other all their weary days
And die unsatisfied—and this is Fate!"

This was written by Susan Marr Spalding of Bath, Maine, and later of Rockford, Delaware, about 1874. It was widely copied by the Press. The *Magazine of Poetry*, October, 1890, gave the lines with a biographical notice of the writer. The authoress included it in a small volume of her best work, *The Wings of Icarus*, in 1892. The late Forrest Morgan of Hartford, Conn., who was her personal friend, printed it in his paper in 1894. It was frequently included in anthologies, particularly Warner's *Library of the World's best Literature* in 1897.

For a generation it had been known, and quoted in every American courtship where the parties had come from distant places and cared for poetry. Many Americans can testify with personal experience.

On January 18th, 1908, *Fate* appeared in England in *The Saturday Review* above the signature—G. E. Edmundson, Bucaramanga, 1907. An English girl in her 'teens with an ear for good verse treasured the lines as something to keep her eye on and do her best. In the winter of that year a Mr. Hibgame gave the first two lines under "Authors Wanted" in *Notes and Queries* (10 S.X., 309). The girl, with her accurate textual memory at once turned up page and column in *The Saturday Review* and sent the reply. When sufficient time had elapsed for the American mail to arrive America claimed her own and a brief correspondence followed.

Publicly, the matter ended there, except for a casual remark or two in *Punch*. "He—what does he do?—Oh, writes poetry for *The Saturday Review!*" Behind the scenes an interesting correspondence took place. Harold Hodge, the then Editor of *The Saturday Review*, with the courtesy of a great mind, acknowledged he had been deceived. No one expects editors to be omniscient. He did his best to take the matter further. He naturally had presumed it to be the honest work of his contributor.

Forrest Morgan wrote for details of the encounter and suggested that if the English correspondent had not got a copy of *The Wings of Icarus*, Samuel Bancroft, Jun., of Wilmington, Delaware (not her publisher) might have one to spare. He had, "the last of its race," which he most generously presented to the English girl with a nice inscription and a copy of Mrs. Spalding's last poem, *A Question*, written in 1902 on the death of her full sister Julia Marr.

She herself had but lately passed away, leaving this small collection of beautiful poems behind her. Forrest Morgan once asked her why she had not published more? She said frankly that the inspiration to which she owed that volume had been a love which had gone from her life and the world. Anyone who reads her *A Song's Worth* will understand.

For twenty years this volume with the above correspondence has been treasured. Now, in 1928, a paraphrase of *Fate*—too close to claim any originality—has appeared in *Argosy* above the name "W. Augustus Adam."

> "Two shall be born, one toward the setting sun,
> One toward the rising; one where snow-clad pines
> O'erlook a grey and sullen sea, and one
> Where groves of palm-trees wave and fiercely shines
> The sun on southern seas; nor shall they know
> Aught of each other, nor in wildest dreams
> Have seen each other's face—yet these shall go

Across mad seas, where every danger seems
Death-fraught, and each, unknowing and unknown,
Unconsciously shall turn their erring feet
By devious paths and trackless deserts lone
With none to guide, until at last they meet,
Becoming one, and find 'mid sweetest tears
Of joy completion in each other's kiss,
With fruitful love and passion through all years,
And shall at last be satisfied—and this
Is Fate."

It is not good enough. No one would attempt so to paraphrase Milton's sonnet on his own blindness or Keats' *St. Agnes Eve*. As the editor says, it may not be a technical literary offence, but it is very questionable from the point of view of good taste. Major Adams should have mentioned the source of his lines.

If all poetry lovers became acquainted with the work of Susan Marr Spalding first-hand the attempts to borrow her inspiration would cease.

ETHEL M. TURNER.

Our contributor, Mr. J. Charles Davis, is a young man who has been writing for four years. Most of his work has been, in fiction, of an idealistic and romantic nature ; the balance of it has been essays, articles and monographs on historical and philosophical subjects. He has been studying Philosophy for six years and teaches a small private class on that subject. Articles from his pen are to be found in the recent issues of the Haldeman-Julius Monthly, the quarterly issue of *The Psychoanalytic Review* and the quarterly issue of *The Personalist*, published by the University of Southern California. A book of philosophical pensées, entitled *Thoughts on Life*, is to be published in the spring of 1929. He is more or less conservative and idealistic in theory and philosophy ; but in world affairs, economics, and science, he is liberal. His favourite poets are Swinburne, Lucretius, Pope, and Shelley ; his favourite novelists, Hugo and Tolstoi. He ranks Amiel as one of the very finest thinkers and writers. As for philosophers, he loves them all, but loves Spinoza, Plato, and Hegel just a bit more than the others. Mr. Davis is commercially connected with the house of Charles Scribner's Sons, representing them in the sale of fine books, rare editions, and standard classics.

* * *

Col. Sir Edward Brotherton, a life member of The Poetry Society and uncle of our contributor, Dorothy Una Ratcliffe, has given to the nation Kirkham Abbey, Yorkshire, established in the twelfth century by Augustinian canons.

ON MECHANICAL HALLELUJAHS, OR HOW NOT TO DO IT

GRYPHONS, I am told, do not exist; and though I can imagine fire-eating quadrupeds endowed with leathern wings and heraldic tails I find the idea a poor substitute for the genuine monster. Until some philosopher proves that words alone have reality we must remember that the invention of a name creates nothing but the name. Man dissects his cosmos and the relations he gleefully discovers between the fragments are necessarily the arbitrary rules by which the original dissociation was carried out. Thus Newton's Second Law is merely the definition of a new concept—Force.

Too often a label is given to a group of objects and then treated as though it defined some characteristic, real or imaginary, by which the objects were selected. Primarily, the word " poetry " is used to label all the verse ever written (" verse " is easily defined); it is then restricted to " good " verse; then to some quality by which " good " verse may be detected; finally the quality is discovered in some writings which would not have been called verse originally. The collective noun has become an abstraction and its field has changed in the process. Critics, and even poets, set out to define the abstraction forgetting that it may not be a single positive quality at all. Certainly we may agree with Shelley[1] that " Reason is the enumeration of quantities already known; imagination is the perception of the value of those quantities. . . . Poetry, in a general sense, may be defined to be 'the expression of the imagination.' " But " expression " remains undefined. It is possible that the " good " verses are those which remain after rejecting the " bad," *i.e.*, those which violate certain rules. It should not be difficult to define the badnesses of John Ford's execrable line :—" Such undershrubs as subjects sometimes might " even taken in its context. Badness in general may prove as personal and difficult of definition as Beauty itself, but it may be possible to enumerate specific badnesses set high above the flux of taste and fashion.

Badness is anything which tends to distract the reader in a way the poet did not intend :—" Panting red pants into the West." No one can read these words of Francis Thompson without thinking of the wholesale trade in cowboys' underclothing. Often these diverting associations are recent growths; the Elizabethans, presumably, saw nothing amusing in the words " nor can they raise the wind," and a little effort enables us to appreciate the line as Marlowe intended. The serious reader will pass Milton's " High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit " without a smile. It is far more difficult for the modern reader to appreciate the conceits of Crashaw and his contemporaries :—

[1] *A Defence of Poetry*, p. 1.

" And now where're he strayes,
Among the Galilean mountaines,
Or more unwellcome wayes,
He's follow'd by two faithfull fountaines ;
Two walking baths ; two weeping motions ;
Portable, and compendious oceans."

These lines (which were not included in the original version) have been more often ridiculed than any others in the language, yet at one time the metaphor was common in English poetry :—

" O pooles of Hesebon ; the baths of grace,
Where happie spirits dive in sweet desires,
[Southwell, *Saint Peter's Complaint.*]

" Thou letst me wash Thy feet in my teare bath : "
[Gervase Markham, *Marie Magdalen's Lamentations.*]

" for how can Aga weep ?
Or run a brinish shower of pearled tears,
Wanting the watery cisterns of his eyes ? "
[Robert Greene, *Selimus.*]

" Forth from those two tralucent cisterns brake
A stream of liquid pearl, which down her face
Made milk-white paths."
[Marlowe, *Hero and Leander.*]

The fault is ours, we lack that high seriousness of those who found nothing common on the earth.

The careless sinner is different; and even Keats had careless moments:—

" But what creates the most intense surprise
His soul looks out through renovated eyes."

and " Those lips, O slippery blisses."

These slipshod renovations worry us ; domestic words have dangerous associations. If Keats was careless, Wordsworth was deliberate :

" For still, the more he works, the more
Do his weak ankles swell."

" What clothes he might have left, or other property."

" Spade ! with which Wilkinson has tilled the ground."

To find poetry in that, one must needs surpass all mystics and find a secret excellent in badness. It was unfair of Tennyson to write :— " The glass with little Margaret's medicine in it." The reader has been left to supply the poetry. " Imagination," says Coleridge,[1] " reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities . . . the sense of novelty with old and familiar objects ;

[1] *Biographia Literaria II*, p. 12.

a more than usual state of emotion, with more than usual order; judgment ever awake and steady self-possession with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement." When Tennyson or Wordsworth or the courageous modern poets fail to introduce the sense of novelty, we can only escape from the resulting mental discomfort by laughter. Roses and islands, the moon and silver seas, ruin and angry dawn—these are drenched in poetry and no one but a maladroit rhinoceros can fail completely if he uses them; it requires a new imagination to handle street-lamps, trams and teashops.

There is a danger that "modern" poetry may depend so much on contemporary fashion that the next generation will find it as *démodé* as the Rev. Cornelius Whur's *Female Friend.*

A thousand objects bright and fair
May for a moment shine,
Yet many a sigh and many a tear
But mark their swift decline;
While lasting joys the man attend
Who has a polished female friend!

When this poem becomes a genuine antique it will cease to be funny; the ambiguous rhyme may or may not be defective, the triteness will remain.

Just as the slow change in the symbolic value of words creates difficulties for the reader of poetry, so does the gradual alteration of pronunciation, and a line devoid of rhythm cannot be called poetic: "In England or wherever you are."

On the other hand, extreme regularity of stress, as in some Pre-Shakespearean end-stopped blank-verse, can become very annoying. Rhythm is a matter of content as well as sound; it requires a balancing of thought against thoughts which may be used to enrich the accentual and quantitative rhythm which may itself be varied by syncopation and used as "counter-point" against the underlying standard rhythm.

Rhyme, too, provides its difficulties. The ear grown weary of the death of the breath and the breeze in the trees and the loves of the doves welcomes the subtleties of assonance and allows the eye to take its pleasure in rhyming slaughter and laughter, but rhymes like Butler's, whether due to different or indifferent pronunciation, afford us no relief.

"For Rhyme the rudder is of Verses
With which, like ships, they steer their courses."

We may tolerate:—

"Like the French Hercules and as strong
In all the labours of the Tongue"

but we cannot excuse "Christians" and "citrons," "fertile" and "girdle," "discourse" and "whiskers." There are limits.

Barham amuses us by rhyming "Mephistopheles" with "hot coffee lees": in serious verse such diversion (and it is common in Browning) can prove extremely irritating on a first reading. The failures we have examined are all weaknesses of expression and many of them are due, as we have seen, to external changes. We tend to regard them as jokes, but: "O, Chatterton, how very sad thy fate?" (Keats), and

> "Winter is gone, and spring is over;
> The cuckoo-flowers grow mauver and mauver."
> [Alfred Austin.]

cannot be treated in this way. The first would be a joke in bad taste, *i.e.*, laughter would provide an escape from something we do not wish to escape; the second is a bad joke, *i.e.*, laughter is an unsatisfactory escape, for even when we are reconciled to the technical failure ("mauver and mauver") the idea remains trivial and trite.

All great poets are guilty of occasional faults of expression: Shakespeare's juggling with words may be permissible in Sonnet CXXXV, but not in the second line of Sonnet CIV. Failure of imagination is more serious. It may result in commonplace and platitude (though these, as we have seen, are often due to inadequate expression); in poetasters it commonly leads to vandalism, insincerity and sentimentality. Affectation may result from the poet's conscious attempt to form the style he needs, but insincerity is no mere blemish; it is death. The poem is all putty and the sensitive reader will soon discover it.[1] In Colley Cibber's *Birthday Ode* of 1731, we read:

> "Let our publick high spirits be raised to our Height
> Yet our Prince, in that Virtue, will lead 'em.
> From our Welfare, he knows, that his Glory's more bright
> As obedience enlarges our Freedom."

If that is not due to humbug it denotes idiocy, and Cibber, we know, was no fool.

Vandalism is the result of a lack of appreciation. The plagiarist should beautify his borrowings, not borrow the beauty. Shakespeare and Marlowe, understanding this, constantly remodelled the best that they themselves had written. Rupert Brooke knew something of the art; from Dryden's *Don Sebastian*, Act I:

> "I beg no pity for this mould'ring clay:
> For if you give it burial there it takes
> Possession of your earth;
> If burnt and scatter'd in the air, the winds
> That strow my dust diffuse my royalty,

[1] See Robert Graves: *On English Poetry*, p. 78; but see also p. 101 "When is a fake not a fake?"

And spread me o'er your clime ; for where an atom
Of mine shall light, know there Sebastian reigns—— "

he distilled :—

" If I should die, think only this of me :
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed " ;

More often it happens that the pilferer misses the true source of the beauty that he covets. Vaughan, himself a great poet, noted the rich conceit in Herbert's *Agonie* :

" Love is the liquor sweet and most divine
Which my God feels as blood, but I, as wine."

In *The Passion* he wrote :—

" Most blessed Vine !
Whose juice so good
I feel as Wine,
But thy fair branches felt as blood."

" Converting a subtle metaphor into a flat simile," says Q.[1] As a matter of fact, the simile is a good simile ; but all similes are flat, they are diagrammatic representations of a similarity of structure. Poetic metaphors imply more than this, they suggest subtly a relation which escapes logical analysis. They can reconcile " opposite or discordant qualities " and unify diverse experiences.

Last in the list of vices is sentimentality, which may be defined as an emotional judgment on a question capable of logical discussion. (There exists also an inverse sentimentality which attempts to deny emotion altogether.) Much musical appreciation is sentimental and utterly incomprehensible to the real musician. Like humour, it is a form of mental laziness. Often its judgments can be *proved* to be false and it is then found that the subject no longer causes the original emotions. Sentimental pity is frequently a judgment of this kind ; there is enthusiasm, but no steady self-possession. Sentimental verse is too common to need quotation.

The demonstration of the shoddiness of sentimentality, however, merely proves the falsity of false intuition. St. Thomas, it must be remembered, meant by " intuition " only those judgments incapable of logical disproof. He saw no possibility of a clash between intellect and intuition. Let us use logic wherever possible, but the logical sign is, after all, a shaven image deprived of most of its associations. The world described logically or scientifically is not the world of experience, but an organized mental universe, similar to it in some

[1] *Studies in Literature*, First Series, p. 132.

respects, but far less complex. Now modern science is not sure that all aspects of the universe *are* organized. As T. E. Hulme suggested,[1] " The apparent scientific unity of the world may be due to the fact that man is a kind of sorting machine." Niels Bohr[2] has pointed out that " it will at first seem deplorable that in atomic problems we have apparently met with such a limitation of our usual means of visualization." It is impossible to visualize an electron which can foresee the future and, if it has a position, is neither still nor in motion, and if it is still or in motion, has no position. The new Quantum Mechanics of Heisenberg and Dirac and the Wave Mechanics of Schrödinger suggest that the observed facts *may* be represented mathematically but " working models " are utterly impossible. The concepts of science do not possess that kind of reality. With the intellect thus uncertain of its own success, it is clear that we must discount the cheap and patronizing raptures of the ignorant.

Mr. Alfred Noyes has been led by injudicious praise to mistake his weakness for his strength. " From the point of view of the physicist," says Sir J. J. Thomson,[3] " a theory of matter is a policy rather than a creed, its object is to connect or to co-ordinate apparently diverse phenomena, and above all to suggest, stimulate and direct experiment." Mr. Noyes adopts the old scientific materialism as a creed and bigness as a deity. His mechanical hallelujahs are versifications of antiquated text books. Mathematics and mathematical physics have a beauty as precise and classical as that of Bach or Dürer, but it resides in its method not its subject matter. *Kubla Khan* shows something of this quality of clarity, so do the poems of M. Valèry. It is present in the *Cosmogony* of Sir J. H. Jeans, it is utterly lacking in *William Herschel Conducts.*

> " I grow aware
> Of an appalling mystery . . . We, this throng
> Of midgets, playing, listening, tense and still,
> Are sailing on a midget ball of dust
> We call our planet ; O, God, what *can*[4] it mean ? "

The mystery is certainly appalling, but why grow sentimental because the earth is not as big as Betelgeuse ? Mr. Noyes has a host of imitators and they would do well to remember that though the average educated person may be interested in the emotions experienced by a poet looking at the outside of a text book, he is not even amused by the sight of a fool misunderstanding the contents.

MICHAEL ROBERTS.

[1] *Speculations*, p. 228. [2] *Nature*, December 5th, 1925.
[3] *The Corpuscular Theory of Matter*, p. 1.
[4] The italics are due to Mr. Noyes. He uses them very frequently.

John Brown's Body (Heinemann, 10s. 6d.) is an epic work. The author, Stephen Vincent Benet, is known here by his novel, *The Spanish Bayonet*, which gave a remarkable picture of Florida during the War of Independence. This won him a Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, which was extended for a second year in order to enable him to complete the present work. Benet, who is scarcely thirty, and an old Poetry Reviewer, is the brother of the better-known poet, William Rose Benet, a regular contributor to THE POETRY REVIEW before the War, and the brother-in-law to Elinor Wylie, whose latest work is dealt with in this issue. It is pertinent to note in connection with *John Brown's Body*, that for three generations the author's family has been connected with the army, and that his grandfather fought in the Civil War. " The Book of the Month Club " in America had the good taste to adopt this work for August, which caused a nation-wide sensation, selling 80,000 copies to date.

For once popular acclamation has recognized a great work. Here we have the Iliad of a crucial period in American history. Benet does not write sonorously, rather he is matter of fact, never indulging in rhetoric, and for the most part telling his story in plain, nervous narrative form, similar to the style that characterized Mr. Brockington's rendering of *The Nazarene*. Yet he plays with great names, both of men and of ships, in vigorous rolling periods, with occasional lyrics of imaginative beauty and remarkable aptness. Altogether, the work is a big conception finely executed. The story of the conflicting ideals of the men who in America " planted England with a stubborn trust,—But the cleft dust was never English dust "—and of the differences and modifications of race and feeling and interest, that actuated and divided the Protagonists in the struggle between North and South is told in eight books as a connected narrative, in which historic figures are intensified by their being brought into realistic relief in conjunction with fictional characters essential to the development of a convincing episode; as readable as a novel, while being suffused with the penetration and glamour of the poet's vision, and his mastery of his theme and methods. This is surely the greatest narrative poem of our time, really vital, standing in brilliant contrast to the majority of recent narrative poems that have been dull and mechanical, uninspired, and without life or any apparent spiritual impetus, or bizarre and extravagant to the verge of the grotesque and repellent.

The last poem in *Winter Words* (Macmillan, 7s. 6d.) is fitly entitled, " He resolves to say no more," beginning with this apostrophe :

" O my soul, keep the rest unknown !
It is too like a sound of moan,
When the charnel eyed
Pale Horse has nighed :
Yea, none shall gather what I made ! "

This is both characteristic and true of Mr. Hardy. He already has many imitators, but none is equal to him, and we are not likely to hear his like again. The poems in this last volume are distinctly of his peculiar genre, of the significance of which our penetrating contributor, Professor Olivero, will have something to say in the next issue of THE POETRY REVIEW, in an exhaustive article on "The Poetry of Thomas Hardy," which we believe would have pleased and satisfied the poet. In his short introductory note to this last volume he says that he "did not suppose that the licensed tasters had wilfully misrepresented" his previous volume, "knowing well that they could not have read it." We know that Dr. Olivero has read and re-read most carefully all the published work of this peculiar and perverse literary genius.

Sir Hall Caine's *Recollections of Rossetti* (Cassell, 5s.) are intended to correct many misapprehensions that still live and have taken new life during the Centenary about Dante Gabriel. We do not care very much for this class of intimate book, but if the revelation of the private side of a person who is known to the world through his writings is justified, it is in this particular case, and Sir Hall Caine had every right to send out what is a very readable account of his intimate acquaintance with the painter-poet. He is the last survivor of Rossetti's friends; he was his housemate for a considerable period; Rossetti died in his arms, and he possesses the largest body of Rossetti's literary and personal letters that exist, or ever existed. He knew Rossetti's greatness as well as his most intimate domestic affairs, and combated the infirmity that grew upon him through indulgence in a damnable drug. The Buchanan attack unfortunately still prejudices opinion of Rossetti, and we would wish that those who repeat it would correct themselves by reading Buchanan's handsome retraction and the affecting stanzas which cemented the reconciliation.

Mr. W. W. Gibson surprises by his assiduity. Here in *The Golden Room* (Macmillan, 6s. net) we have a further 300 poems following on the amazing collected edition two years ago. We imagine Mr. Gibson a recluse, turning every incident and idea into a poem, but we find in this present volume a record of much personal activity and many intimate associations, much that is too biographical, intimate, and individual for permanence. Such are the epistle in verse to Russell Hillard Loines and the friendly tributes in *The Golden Room*. We would not wish to disparage the generous appreciation of Mr. Gibson's quality and method expressed in these pages some years ago by Mr. Howard Pease, but he seems now to be too generally content with the minor key—to have abandoned his earlier grace and vigour and spaciousness for what may be considered to be the journalese of verse, and to have hardened into a less stern and ironical Hardy, as in "The Quarrel"—

I always meant to make it up with him ;
And might have done so, even yesterday ;
But he's trapped me in his artful way ;
And trapped me, with the healing word unsaid,
In an unending quarrel with the dead.

Of his episodical subjects and his treatment of them " Broadcasting " is one of many impressionist examples that pack *The Golden Room*—

In the hushed curtained room I stood alone,
And read my rhymes out to the microphone.

Yet, scarce could I believe that every word
I breathed perhaps a thousand listeners heard.

Rather, I felt like some poor ghost behind
Death's down-dropped curtain, shut out from his kind,

Desperate to make yet-living loved ones hear
Some fond last message that would make all clear.

To Mr. Laurence Binyon's new ode, *The Idols* (Macmillan, 5s.) may be applied all that has been said about his previous work by Mr. Arthur Hood in THE POETRY REVIEW (opinions, by the way, which we are gratified to hear have passed round the world, and have done much towards forming and reforming poetic taste).

Here we have again the power of the cunning hand and severe mind and in such austere company we are drawn with relief away from all the roses and pale hands, the sighs and the languorous lilies, the absurdities and banalities that clamour for attention in much modern verse. Here, again, is the competent marshalling of vowels and consonants combined with an immensity of feeling leading up to this final conclusion regarding " the miracle that has no name " :

" When I am not, then I am :
Having nothing I have all.
It was my hands that built my prison wall,
It was my thought that did my thought confine,
It was my heart refrained my heart from love.
Now I am stilled as in a gaze divine,
Now I flow upward from my secret well,
Now I behold what spirit I am of.
This body is the Word ; nothing divides
This blood and breath from thought ineffable.
Hold me, Eternal Moment !
The Idols fade : the God abides."

Electra, a version from Sophocles, by Edward Percy (Samuel French, Ltd.) is as much a paraphrase as a translation, though the

main speeches are approximately as close to the Greek in texture as perhaps English can go. This attempt at reconstruction of a classical drama must, however, be judged more from the acting quality of it than from any approach to scholarship or academical interpretation. It is the most actable version we have seen, and should therefore be of the utmost use to those amateur dramatic societies who wish to produce a Greek drama and find that most of the extant versions simply will not " get over," owing to the lines to be spoken being generally not speakable in any natural or dramatic way. A too literal translation is usually impossible on the modern stage, and Mr. Percy's version fills a definite lacuna.

Poetically, perhaps, it is less satisfactory, for the blank verse is not always unimpeachable, and contractions are used far too often. But it is always sayable, which so much blank verse, which may be finer in texture, emphatically is not. The choruses, always an insuperable difficulty in translating from the Greek dramatists—and from Sophocles in particular—are perhaps no better than in any other version, but they are not perceptibly worse. For acting—and it was mainly for the stage, and especially the amateur stage, that it was made—this version is quite one of the best, and the language is vivid and to the point, and dramatic rather than pedantic. It can be recommended to all those who wish to play *Electra* rather than merely to be read in the study. After all, Sophocles wrote his plays to be acted, and the version which makes them actable in the modern sense is to be praised and to be commended.

Lady Margaret Sackville provides an apology and explanation for other work in poetry besides her own in the lines printed as a preface to her new volume, 100 *Little Poems* (Porpoise Press, Edinburgh, 3s. 6d.), but they do specifically and succinctly express her own attitude towards her art, and the terse epigrams that follow should be read in conjunction therewith. They express more of the author's own attitude towards life than she would be inclined to admit, but there are some, notably couplets and quatrains from " A Masque of Edinburgh," that are definite character definitions, with little intrusion of the author's personal feelings and preferences. Here is her characteristic description of John Knox :

> I, from the ancient road our fathers trod,
> Austerely turned and tore apart the screen,
> Set (as I deemed) betwixt Mankind and God,
> Obeyed my conscience and defied the Queen.

Dare we say that Lady Margaret is a *mistress* of the epigram ! She has led the fashion, been responsible for its present vogue, especially in its application to epitaphs that are frequently poignant as well as pregnant, but seldom cynical or unkind. Yet the arrows are not blunt, although animated by the spirit of the preface :

Think not that verse
Which, like the wind,
Blows, wailing, from
The poet's brain,

Proves him perverse
Towards his kind,
Deliberately
In search of pain.

Laughter he loves
Like any child,
And as a boy's
His heart is gay;

Only he moves
As one exiled
From kingdoms long
since
Passed away.

And ancient memories,
Deep-stored
In the recesses
Of his heart,

The magic frees
Of some chance word,
And then a veil
Is rent apart.

So lives he, haunted
By old grief
And passions he
Has never known,

But which, translated,
Bring relief
To ghostly sorrows
Not his own.

There are very few writers alive at the present time who devote their attention to poets at all, and fewer still who have time to spend on poets who are still living. Therefore it is with pleasure that we greet another book from Mr. Coulson Kernahan, who is one of the much-to-be-honoured authors who have written of their contemporaries. In *Five More Famous Living Poets* (Thornton Butterworth, 12s. 6d.) he deals with W. H. Davies, Walter De La Mare, Sir W. Watson, Sir Owen Seaman, and, strange to say, Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith. We cannot help feeling that Mr. Kernahan seems to overestimate Miss Kaye-Smith's value as a poet. Mr. Kernahan apologizes for her inclusion, and, though he is characteristically generous in his praise, we are convinced that he is more at home when writing of Mr. De La Mare, Sir Owen Seaman, and particularly Sir William Watson. Watson certainly deserves all the compliments and praise meted to him by his warm-hearted friend, and it is interesting to see how the author compares him to one of the " Old Contemptibles " ; " Though Sir William Watson's poems are in numbers comparatively few—as were the Old Contemptibles—they are, like the Old Contemptibles, of the right stuff. In warfare it is not always numbers, but training, discipline, and *morale* which decide the issue. Nor is the art of poetry, any more than the science of war, as Mr. Kipling says of the latter, ' to be mastered in haste but after trial and labour.' To the makings of William Watson's poems went trial, labour, stern self-discipline, and study of the Great Masters. Were he not a poet born he could never have written lyrics which could be named ; but that he has with such unfailing dignity sustained the great traditions

of English Poetry, he owes in no small measure to the unremitting, almost infinite patience with which he has 'tempered his blade.'"

The Poetry of John Banister Tabb (The Bodley Head, 8s. 6d.) provides something more than a seasonable gift book. The humorous, sympathetic Virginian Father Tabb has already a widespread reputation in this country, and it is a wise and timely enterprise to publish this collected edition of one who practised what he believed,—that the only ultimate authentic art form (except the dramatic) is the lyric. This accounts for his devotion to the short poem, and for the almost entire exclusion of long poems. Brevity to him was the soul of poetry as well as of wit, and it is an exhilarating recreation to read his four or six-line poems, which suggest so much, and surprise one by their profundity. At his best he is also a supreme artist, approaching in clarity to Robert Herrick and in feeling to Crashaw. Can we say more in praise of one who himself felt keenly the beauty and power of the best in poetry, and never tired of interpreting it so that others might come to the same high appreciation of the gods (as he called the greater poets) that he held to be the greatest of human joys. Let us place side by side two of his characteristic lyrics, *The Pine Trees* and *At the Ebb Tide*, which are outside the greater volume of his semi-religious verse:

(1)

With whispers of futurity
  And echoes of the past,
Twin birds a shelter find in thee
  Against the wintry blast—

The fledgling Hope, that preens her wing.
  Too timorous to fly,
And Memory that comes to sing,
  Her coronach and die.

(2)

O marshes that remain
  In anguish dumb
Till over you again
  The waters come!

So must thy life abide
  In silent pain,
Till love, the truant tide,
  Come back again.

A new translation in verse of a classic is always interesting, and particularly so when it is not merely a new version, but a version in a new style. In *The Story of Æneas* (Cambridge University Press, 8s. 6d.) Mr. H. S. Salt has attempted to prove that the best medium for presenting in English verse the stately roll of Virgil's hexameters is not to be found in blank verse or heroic couplets. "But," he says in his preface, "there is a manner of rhyme which is not liable to the strictures justly passed on the cramped heroic couplet or on any regularly composed stanza—viz., an irregular sequence of lines such as that of Milton's *Lycidas*. Herein a double advantage is secured for the translator; a much greater ease and freedom in the choice of rhyme sounds, and the possibility, as in blank verse, of adapting the length and fashion of the English sentence to those of the Latin—that is of reproducing to some extent, and this is a matter of high

importance, the graduate structure of some of those Virgilian periods which are built up with elaborate care, each successive verse, and each *cæsura* or pause in a verse, contributing to the final effect." Yet, although the translation is a penetrating and scholarly work, it does not seem to achieve its aim as regards metre, for the poetry does not impress one as having come nearer to the grandeur of the *Æneid*. Nevertheless, Mr. Salt must be congratulated on having made a bold attempt, and on having added another valuable translation to those of his famous predecessors.

The title poem in *The Unknown Warrior*, a collection of poems by W. H. Abbott, has a universal appeal as well as a topical application. It is a stately ode, and rare classical beauty, and no facile or sentimental treatment of a grave and glorious theme. It should be read by all who have any share or interest in that Abbey Tomb, a fitting subject for a national threnody. They will find their emotions stirred also by another poem in this collection, dealing with fine reticence with " An English Cemetery in France."

My heart is an old
  Copper bowl
Made to hold
  Wine.
Given away,
  Pawned, sold,
It will stay
  Mine.
Long ago
  It was filled,
Now the wine's
  Drunk or spilled;
Empty, shining
  Copper thing.
When you touch it
  Hear it ring
  Bing,
  Bing,
  Bing!

With these lines, Mrs. Seiffert introduces her *Ballads of the Singing Bowl* (Scribner's, $2.00), divided as *Fates and Phantoms*, *Voyage Toward Chang-Fu*, *The Autumn Faun*, *Mortal Images*. *The Singing Bowl*, which is admittedly her heart, rings pitched throughout with the fundamental tone and harmonics of the A below middle C. Harmonics do not primarily occur in the minor. Their predominant overtones are fixedly in the major. So perhaps it is unnatural to say these wear the colours of the minor—colours that flood each poem. Their burden of colour often drowns the meaning of her lines. We may end a poem mystified and dazed, but with all its atmospheric feeling at heart. Her title gives promise of lyrical narrative poems. But the old construction of the word ballad must be cliché. Most of these forty odd poems require that the narrative be gathered up from within the reader after the subtle suggestion has been offered by Mrs. Seiffert. The reader must join the " copper bowl "—be himself played upon—if the original meaning of the word ballad be carried.

Great Poems of the English Language (Harrap, 10s. 6d.) is the best and most comprehensive collection of its kind. Running to 1,508 pages,

it is by no means a replica of other anthologies so far as its classic poets go, for they are far more fully represented than is usual in such volumes, while its selection of contemporary poets is a better one than has been seen before, and chosen more judicially too. The more one examines it, the more one becomes impressed by its comprehensive completeness, and by the inclusion of what may be described as the key poems in the English language, old and new. Its adequacy is further enhanced by an excellent series of indexes, first lines as well as authors and titles being fully entered. A book for every school and library, and one that will never grow old or lose its charm.

Memories of the great and anxious days when *The Times* discovered that poetry had resumed its ancient place again as the companion, guide, comforter, and inspirer of bewildered men, are brought back by the publication of *A Book of Broadsheets* (Methuen, 7s. 6d.). The book is a collection of those excerpts from the famous writers of prose and verse which were sent out to the soldiers at the front during the Great War, and it is interesting to find that, together with the prose extracts that every Englishman knows, the only set of poems with any possible claim to modernity are those of Mr. Rudyard Kipling. Proof of the preference of the soldiers of 1914-1918 for the poets whose work they knew and loved is shown by this list of representative poets: Shakespeare, Milton, Cowper, Wordsworth, Burns, Lovelace, Tennyson, Blake, Peacock, Shelley, William Morris and Lord Macaulay. An interesting preface concerning the objects and organization of the Broadsheets is added to this book by Mr. Geoffrey Dawson, the Editor of *The Times*.

If an anthology of love poems that aimed at completeness were published it would probably contain seventy-five per cent. of the poetry written in the English language; but Miss Elizabeth D'Oyley has the best that can be done with a volume of the size of *He and She* (Collins, 7s. 6d.). It is a concise volume and the poems have been well and carefully selected. There are many old friends in the book, and not a few poems which are shown by Miss D'Oyley to have been unjustly neglected.

"Action and reaction are equal and opposite," said Emerson. Modern life is strenuous and hurried, and relaxation needs to be the more complete and peaceful. To one who has been long in city pent, *Study to be Quiet* (Benn, 6s.) will come as a very welcome collection of prose and verse in praise of quiet and peace, of country sights and sounds, gardens and lonely and beautiful places. It contains extraordinarily little that is hackneyed, and its size really is ideal for the pocket.

We welcome further additions to the Bodley Head's Helicon series, including *Marpessa* by one of those "lonely antagonists of Destiny"

whose fate he celebrated in splendid verse, Tennyson's " Day Dream " and his " Dream of Fair Women," Rossetti's " Blessed Damozel " and various sonnets—beautifully printed and bound, the best of greeting gifts, except that we are critical of many of the illustrations which should be regarded as decorations rather than adequate pictorial representations of the poets' visions and realities. This remark applies even more forcibly to the bizarre designs that accompany the new Ariel Poems (Faber and Gwyer, 1s.), chiefly single-page verses of fifteen or twenty-four lines, by S. Sassoon, Edith Sitwell, T. S. Eliot, and other ultra-modernists, which will be found a contrast to the conventional Christmas card.

Mr. C. S. Holder is to be congratulated on his *Anthology of School* (Bodley Head, 7s. 6d.). He has collected a large number of poems together which deal very comprehensively with a specific subject, and on looking through the book one is at once convinced of the truth of his claim in his introduction, that he has " found pure poetry and unaffected pathos, burlesque and philosophy, not to speak of the famous songs which are the pride of our Public Schools." It is worth noticing that the composition of verse about schools and schooldays is not by any means confined to schoolmasters and schoolboys, but that poets that are famous the whole world over have turned their hand to this rather sentimental subject. A glance at the index shows amongst others the names of Southey, Wordsworth, Cowper, Shelley, Byron, Burns, Blake, Whittier, Coleridge and Tennyson. Therefore, apart from its excellent interpretation of its title, this book renders an additional service to poetry lovers, by bringing before them for the first time poems by these great authors, which have been up to now, though undeservedly, little known. It is a volume for all school libraries and should be shelved beside the admirable collections of poems dealing with childhood and youth compiled by Mr. L. S. Wood and Miss Susan Miles.

Once more has that literary evergreen, the libretto of *The Mikado*, bloomed for our delight, this time illustrated in colour by W. Russell Flint, and in line by Charles E. Brock, R.I. (Macmillan, 7s. 6d.). The reason for the everlasting popularity of Gilbert's words apart from their own wit, is surely that the immortal Sullivan's melodies ring in our ears as we read them, and these two recommendations coupled with attractive illustrations and good, clear printing—well, in the words of the Mikado himself : " nothing could possibly be more satisfactory."

It is an ill wind that blows no good, and, apparently, were it not for the bad behaviour of the clerk of the weather (whom Mr. Langford Reed suggests with characteristic originality to be a woman), we should be without what will certainly become a most popular gift book. Owing to an accident during the period of slippery streets that we suffered last Christmas, when he broke his leg, Mr. Langford

Reed, finding time hanging on his hands during his convalescence, composed the Limericks (and he is an authority on Limericks) which form *The Indiscreet Limerick Book* (Jarrold, 2s. 6d.). The book is full of ingenious rhymes, and amusing and witty compositions, and they are well up to his high standard of work, which is so well known to the devotees of this particular branch of verse.

We have seldom seen a book of verse dealing with the life of Christ that is so pleasing as *Poem Pictures, Scenes from the Life of Christ* (Morgan and Scott, 1s. 6d.) by Henry James Glanville. The short poems really *are* poem pictures, as the Earl of Selborne says in his foreword: "What he (the author) has done has been to select with judgment scenes from the life of Christ, and to render them into blank verse. He has succeeded in his task because he has painted his pictures in a few simple words, and because he has resisted all temptation to embellish or elaborate the gospel story." The book, through its lack of the maudlin, and its straightforwardness, bears some resemblance to the work of the Rev. Allen Brockington, except that it has not the striking individuality of *The Nazarene.*

In *Venetian Poems* by Henry Pinkerton (Henry Walker, 3s.) we meet a poet who is so obviously in love with his subject that we may forgive him the slight defects in his style. Apart from an ungainly and awkward rhyme here and there, the verse is rhythmical and very easy to read. Although it is not pleasant in "On the Lagoon" to find "carmine" rhyming with "brine," yet this stanza from "Galeazzo" is worthy of quotation:

> "They went out, silent, to a balcony
> That bent above black water; faint, afar,
> As some profound, perpetual human sigh,
> They heard waves break to foam upon the bar
> Of Lido; and the pitchy, troubled sky
> Nor moon revealed nor any silver star;
> So dark it seemed she scarcely saw the face
> Of him who crushed her in his hot embrace."

The book is beautifully printed on hand-made paper. Another volume from the same publisher (*Amateur Soldiers* by W. G. Thomas) carries us back to the soldier poets who illuminated the war but about which they wrote little. Mr. Thomas apparently went through the war and is able to describe actual experiences and episodes in terse, graphic verse, grimly, with a touch of satire and a piercing realism.

In *The Branch of the Hawthorn Tree* (Grayhound Press, £1) of which only 460 copies have been printed, we find that Mr. Monk Gibbon can write some of the most delightful verse that we have seen for some time. His poetry is refreshingly simple and direct, though there is an undercurrent of deep thought running through the whole. The book is decorated, not illustrated, as the artist himself points out, by

M. Picart Le Doux, the little head and foot pictures having been painted by hand in France where the whole book was produced. Of the two spirits that of the artist is the more modern. He is advanced where the poem with which he is dealing is definitely conservative. But in one respect artist and poet are alike. That is in the absolute economy of the means they employ. It is this which led to Le Doux's selection as illustrator. A poem by Monk Gibbon is an epitome. It is the quintessence of a single thought without elaboration. A design by Le Doux is equally brief, equally simple. It is the economy of art applied to the economy of literature. It is a footnote to a footnote. Another example of the French presentation of English Poetry comes to us from Mauritius, in the form of a book of verse by John de Lingen (*Songs to Eurydice*). It contains some fine poems, and proves that Mr. de Lingen has a delicate sense of rhythm, which coupled with some far-seeing images has given us poetry that is not to be read without a definite feeling of pleasure and congratulation.

Mr. Noel Douglas has published as the seventeenth volume in his well-known Replica Series of First Editions an exact reproduction of Sir Philip Sidney's Defence of Poesie. Best known as *An Apologie for Poetrie*, this work was written about 1581 but was not published until 1595. In that year two distinct editions appeared printed from different manuscripts and bearing different titles. The earlier entry in the register is that of Ponsonby (*The Defence of Posie* by Sir Phillip Sidney Knight London printed for William Ponsonby 1595). Olney's edition (*An Apologie for Poetrie* written by the Right Noble Virtuous and Learned Sir Phillip Sidney Knight . . . at London printed for Henry Olney 1595) has a slightly different text and includes four sonnets by Henry Constable which are not in Ponsonby's edition. Olney's sheets were later transferred to Ponsonby who re-issued them with his title-page. Copies of the original Ponsonby edition are exceedingly rare. In view of the fact that Ponsonby was the printer of the authorized edition of *Arcadia* in 1598 and that he took over Olney's copies of the *Apologie* it seems probable that his edition is to be regarded as the better authorized. It has therefore been chosen for reproduction by Mr. Noel Douglas. There are copies of both editions in the British Museum and the British Museum copy of the original Ponsonby issue is reproduced.

Sir William Watson's " Selected Poems " (Butterworth, 12s. 6d.)

He surely *does* " remind us of the stars "
By his melodious elegiac strains ;
No chance-flung snag of transient triteness mars
The flow of measures which his lyre ordains.
At " Wordsworth's grave " we find the gift of rest
And peace in magic lines of beauty limned
With skilful art, designed to aid the quest
For shining Truth by clouds of words undimmed.

In " Laleham churchyard " we are led to trace
In swift-lined verse of cunning, fitting mould
The unruffled tide of Arnold's strength and grace
Bringing from Grecian seas his gifts of gold.

And whereso'er among these flowers we stray,
Their Eden effluence, their abiding bloom
Embalm old Kings of song against decay
Which shrouds vain vampers in a dusty gloom.

J.P.

* * *

Miss M. Aumonier writes very pleasantly about gardens, but her water-colours are still better. In *The Poetry of Gardens* (Anacker) we have both charming verse and pictures, and what is presumably that mysterious form—" poetic prose." Anyhow, it is quite successful.

We are reminded by several interested inquirers who had read the notice that the name of the publisher and the price were omitted from the notice of Jean Smith's *Shepherd of Souls*. We hasten to add this essential information—Humphrey Milford and 5s. net.

We are asked to remind readers " to give books this Christmas." As an important addendum, we draw their attention to the many desirable books noticed and advertised in this issue—all of direct interest and appeal to Poetry Reviewers.

* * *

Readers are requested to send to the Hon. Director of The Poetry Society any circular matter or other communications they may receive relating to a concern styled " The Poetry Lovers' Fellowship." He is already in receipt of a leaflet purporting to emanate from this body but bearing neither the names nor the addresses of the sponsors nor the printers' imprint. It has been referred by the Council to the Society's Hon. Solicitor. A later pamphlet is less irresponsible. In fact it provides a plethora of names and addresses of sorts and incorporates the prospectus of another entirely different kind of organization which we venture to think does not need this kind of patronage. We notice in this curious pamphlet a disingenuous claim to disinterestedness associated with a bold announcement of a critical service at the democratic rate of 10s. per 50 lines with a reading fee for a volume of poems of one guinea, and a publishing scheme carrying an imprint that " will indicate that the contents are of the highest poetic value and their publication beyond any possibility of criticism." We found too a curiously defensive rule that " members wishing to criticize the club publicly must first resign," and the claim to " the invaluable assistance " of a " capitation fee of 6d. per member paid promptly on April 1st each year " ! A staff of secretaries and the " hon. auditor (Gt. Britain) "—who is also a " general secretary "—will be kept busy if the accounts are to be similar to the imprint.

THE POET'S FELLOWSHIP :

THE PREMIUM EDITOR'S REPORT

The proposed New Poetry Assessment Board has been more discussed and approved since our last issue than when it was originally mooted. But some of our readers continue to think its scope is confined to this particular feature of THE POETRY REVIEW, whereas it is intended to establish a reliable authoritative body to deal with the whole corpus of new poetry—to sift, winnow, classify—attempting something vitally necessary but which modern criticism—in a parlous condition—leaves undone or handles very partially and irresponsibility. We mentioned the need for such a Board, with an enlarged scope, in this department of the Review because our experience has proved to us its desirability if not necessity and brought to us a realization of the greater scope and value of such an extension—a natural enlargement of the duties we have discharged consistently for a score of years, but not by way of reflection on this long-standing feature of THE POETRY REVIEW, which has rendered a unique service of which we are proud. A sane, sound policy has been adhered to, with no violent changes, and any tendency towards individual partialities and preferences have been promptly checked. One chief adjudicator acted for more than a decade—a longer period than any other qualified individual can have acted in such a capacity elsewhere. The assistant adjudicators who have worked under general direction and supervision have served for lengthy periods—sometimes too long, because, as indicated occasionally in THE POETRY REVIEW, an adjudicate is likely to get stale, to weary of what become an irksome task and to get into a groove. These adjudicators have included two distinguished poets and several of less eminence but with deep knowledge of and concern for their art and craft, and particularly qualified to act as assessors of other writers' work in spite of their being prone to favour one or another particular style of work, and to be antagonistic to certain methods and forms of expression alien to themselves. On the whole, the discharge of this difficult task of adjudication and criticism has been judicious, consistent, serious—never careless, or changeable or casual, and never offensive, except that offence may have been given by the frank, occasionally caustic criticism which gained for this service admiration and commendation outside our immediate circles and by our being opposed to log-rolling and favouritism and having to decline boastful, inexpert, and even malicious assistance. We have maintained a high conception of the functions of this department, and have seldom, if occasionally, had our trust betrayed or our contributors' confidence abused.

The New Poetry Assessment Board is a development of this service and experience, but a bigger matter, calling for new and extended arrangements, and we hope to deal with its constitution and prospects more fully in our next issue. Our immediate concern is this month's awards, which have been made again by the erudite Professor of

3 0

English Literature who dealt with the August MSS.—one of several professors of recognized standing who have acted as judges of the premium poems. He gives first preferences to Miss Esther Samms, Miss Sylvia Dobson, Miss E. Alden, Mr. W. K. Lewis, and Mr. F. Whitworth, for the grace, sureness, and individuality of their lyrics. He particularly commends the rich, mannered " To the Early Elizabethans " by Margaret Napier, Mary A. Woodward's " Death at 80 " (except for a trite ending), a fragment by A. R. Heron Ward (in spite of his deliberate crudity), and the always serious, carefully executed work of Nancy Pollok, F. Kemp, and G. W. Eustace. Without particularizing them, he commends the contributions submitted by

B. Annakin,
V. Arlett,
O. Bell,
E. Binnington,
D. Burton,
L. F. Collingburn,
L. Dale,
B. Eve,
D. E. Greville,
B. Jones,
F. S. Larkin,
B. Lee,
M. K. Mackillop Brown,
G. E. Merrick,
E. Nolan,
P. O'Donnell,
I. Ormsby,
M. Rees,
Dorothy Rose,
E. Samms.
G. Simons,
B. Skeat,
V. Stait,
Ismay Trimble,
E. Preston Watkins,
E. Wild,
J. Willwyn,
A. D. L. Wilson,
L. R. Wager,
Aileen Ward,

The premium offer is continued, and we hope may be increased with the New Year and that new contributors will be attracted to this very real, vital Fellowship and take active part in its development. Criticism is provided as usual by the same experienced, sympathetic critic who has been associated with us for many years and who for still more years has been the conductor of a critical verse magazine and whose individual gift of expression has found outlet in published volumes as well as in THE POETRY REVIEW and other periodicals. From the same highly-qualified source may be obtained instruction in prosody and the technique of verse-writing—guidance, correction, encouragement from a true maker.

Attention is drawn, too, to the intriguing Lewis competition and the new American premium. A comprehensive Board of Examiners are engaged on the MSS. received in the " Flight " competition, and we hope to publish the awards in the next issue, together with details of another Bartlett premium offer.

Mr. John de Lingen (Mauritius) and Mr. J. E. S. Old (Limbi, Nyasaland) are specially welcomed to our Fellowship.

Mr. John Purdie writes : " I am still wondering if the new poets are evolving new designs in rhyme : I am not an expert on the subject,

but I should like to hear Mr. Casson, for example, commenting upon the rhymes used by that virile writer, G. W. Eustace, in his poem " Many Waters Cannot Quench." In my judgment of what is rhyme there are no less than nineteen false or imperfect rhymes in this poem. Take the second last stanza—according to the scheme proposed in the first verse, we ought to have three rhymed couplets. Here are the words which follow this scheme in this verse—

"Brow—snow ; understood—worshipped ; dead—answered. Now, making every allowance for local differences of pronunciation, I cannot see that any one of these couplets rhymes with smoothness and strength I note that Humbert Wolfe—who ought to know when rhyme is rhyme—perpetrates some peculiar rhythmicy howlers in a poem on " Love "—Love—enough ; conceived—lived ; have—grave. I am perplexed, and would welcome correction or castigation—I care not which."

Mr. Eustace courteously supplies the following reply : " As regards the " nineteen false or imperfect rhymes " in " Many Waters Cannot Quench . . , " I would submit that the majority at least are legitimate half-rhymes and that no attempt is made to evolve " new designs in rhyme." Possibly, " understood " with " worshipped " contains an overstraining of the half-rhyme, but " brow " with " snow " is certainly not weak, and " dead " with " answer*ed* " is a full rhyme.

" The instances quoted from Humbert Wolfe's poem do not, I submit, constitute " howlers," but are perfectly sound half-rhymes. Swinburne rhymes " boughs " with " house " (noun), " good " with " blood," " funereal " with " musical " ; and Wm. Morris, " garden " with " warden," " were " with " year," " wood " with " blood," etc., etc.

" The point your correspondent raises appears to be the legitimacy of the half-rhyme in English Poetry. Admittedly, the half-rhyme can be overdone—and I doubt not that this is so in my poem quoted—but I would maintain that the half-rhyme is often a source of strength rather than of weakness. Rhyme is a restriction. To exclude the half-rhyme would be to deprive English Poetry of a latitude associated with, if not essential to, the expression of thought in " the best words in their best order." I am sure that an article in The Poetry Review on the use and abuse of the half-rhyme would be of great help to amateur versifiers like myself.

" I think that your correspondent has raised, and legitimately raised, a point upon which the Poetry Review is well fitted to pronounce judgment."

In the introduction to *The American Poetry Circle Anthology*, 1928 ($2.00), Mrs. Leacy Naylor Green-Leach, who publishes the book, and who has no false modesty about the financial side of such publications, dealing with the matter with a disarming frankness that is refreshing after the pretentious humbug indulged in on our side, mentions that

she does not think that too many people are writing poetry, because "by reading and just trying to write verse, there comes recognition of the beauty of the Art of Poetry, to which, otherwise, the mind would be impervious." In the anthology itself, which is a very creditable collection of lyrical work by a large active band of collaborators, we find the names of our friends, Frederick Herbert Adler, Marianne Clarke, Euphemia Macleod, Benjamin Musser, Ruth Clay Price, Clyde Robertson, Bertha M. Skeat, Virginia Spates, Elizabeth Toldridge, Evelyn M. Watson, and Ethel Fanning Young—not forgetting Mrs. Green-Leach herself.

£50 ($250) PRIZE FOR BEST POEMS ABOUT CATHEDRALS

To secure a symposium of poetic expressions regarding the world's great shrines, $250 has been provided by Mrs. Percy Hamilton Stewart, of New York and Southampton, for the best poems about cathedral churches.

This Cathedral Poetry Contest is the fifteenth international poetry competition held under the auspices of THE POETRY REVIEW. The poets may select their favoured cathedral of any country or time, dealing with it as they may be inspired. There is no restriction as to the aspects that may be touched, such as the history, traditions, legends, spiritual influence, art and architecture, which make up the pageantry of civilization.

Manuscripts should be typed, the name and address of the author written in the upper left corner, and should be addressed to Mrs. Alice Hunt Bartlett, 299 Park Avenue, New York, U.S.A., marked "Cathedral Contest." Closing date, March 15th, 1929. More than one poem may be submitted by the same author. No manuscript will be returned, but rejected poems will remain the property of the authors, who may publish them elsewhere after the awards have been announced in THE POETRY REVIEW. The Editor, who will act as adjudicator, acting on the recommendations of the Poetry Premiums Committee, reserves the right to divide the premium in four or more equal or unequal amounts and to publish in due course any of the prize winning or commended or reserved poems.

* * *

We regret to have to record the death of another life-member and vice-president of The Poetry Society, Sir Lees Knowles, a famous Lancastrian, who in a strenuous life of practical public service maintained an interest in and concern for poetry—a type of member of whom the Poetry Society is proud.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S VERSE COMPETITION

AMONG the *Seniors* in the *Young People's Verse Competition* the first place belongs to *L. Wolfson* (Oulton School) for two excellent sonnets. They are good both in originality of thought and in execution. The lyrical touch given to the final couplet of "Machines" sweetens and sharpens the truth urged in the rest of the poem. Second comes *Helen E. Flanders* (Vermont) with a tender little poem, "Under the Eaves," whose sentiment is well curbed by restraint. *Joyce M. Patterson* (Luton School), comes third with two poems, "Bolton Abbey Woods" and "Song of Hero," that are melodious and fluent but show less individuality of thought.

Yvonne Franklin-Thomas (Lawnside School) sends an interesting long poem, "Andrea" which is Highly Commended for the even quality of its rhymed couplets. The two winning poems are printed below:

To Machines

There lies a beauty in a great machine:
  Not only in its pure, unhurried might,
Nor in the rhythmic heave and strain, nor keen
  Continuous rise and fall of flashing light.

But that the high soul's clear imaginings
  Have gathered all the wonders of the earth,
Have put the breath of life into dead things,
  And by the Fancy given power birth.

Thus, mankind marching onwards to its fate,
  Fulfilling still the immemorable plan,
Bears testimony ever, "God is great,
  Great are his works, and greatest of them man."

Aspire and climb, then! What though cravens preach
The rainbow's end forever past your reach.

L. Wolfson.

Under the Eaves

Half-timbered houses, shutting out the sky,
Happy window where I watched my first love go by!

I am old with days and weeks, I've the strength of ten,
But O, that I could love a lad, the way I loved then!

Little doors, open, and keep me, little house.
I would not disturb thy dreams. Still as a mouse
Up the winding stairway, on my soft tip-toe,
Up the steeper garret stairs, creeping I'll go.
Little doors open . . . Yes . . . there's my little bed
With the pink candle-wicking over it spread.
Sing with me, old pillow; doze with me, old quilt—
Thou art the haven where my fairest dreams dwelt.

Little window, watch with me ; little curtains, sigh—
Happy window where I watched my first love go by.

I am old with one more year ; I have talked with men.
But O that I could love a boy as I loved then !

HELEN ELIZABETH FLANDERS.

The Junior Class has also done well, especially numerically. Top honours are divided between *Margaret Chesterton* (Lawnside School) for " The Winds " and *George W. L. Telfer* (Putney) for " On Attaining the age of 11 years 8 months." The former poem is as fresh and vigorous as its title demands, with a nice terseness about it, and shows a feeling for form. The theme of the latter poem is surprisingly mature but is yet pleasantly touched with the naivety of childhood. It also shows a distinct feeling for form, both in the varied length and arrangement of the lines, though there is a tendency to juggle with some of them for the sake of effect. The artifice of this poem is in marked contrast to the simplicity of the other. Both are printed below :

THE WINDS

I am the North Wind,
Bold and strong !
The wind of the gales
Driving snow-drifts along.

I am the East Wind,
Biting cold !
Not even the lambs
Are quite safe in their fold.

I am the South Wind,
Lazy, warm !
Spring follows my wake,
All the leaves on trees form.

I am the West Wind
Wet and cool !
Far over the hills
I make many a pool.

MARGARET CHESTERTON.

ON ATTAINING THE AGE OF 11 YEARS AND 8 MONTHS

Oh ! sweetest Childhood ! how fast your treacherous charms do fade !
O ! sternest Nature !
O ! let me step once more into the fairy glade
Of infancy,
And let me once more see
That
Which I once ever was, but ne'er again shall be !

Delightful Childhood ! how many and many a time,
Coquettish Nature !
I've lazed my time in idleness sublime,
And thinking nought
But that I might be
That
Which I did once, but do not now, long to be.

As sweetest Youth retards, so, far behind will get
My Childhood's years.
The golden gates of Childhood close upon me yet,
Despite my tears,
And I shall find that I am he—
That
Which I did once, but do not now, long to be.

GEORGE WILSON LANDOR TELFER.

Highly Commended are :—
Topsy Lister (Lawnside) for "Woodland Friends and Twilight."
Rosalie Tylor (Lawnside) for "The Dance of the Fairies."
Elizabeth Cuffe (Lawnside) for "A Mermaid."

These poems are mainly selected for some happy turn of phrase such as :—"a branch that looked like part of the sky" and "moonbeams like swords and a shining lance."

Commended are :—Dorothy Rees (Lawnside) for "Pirates," Joan Cuffe (Lawnside) for "Spring," Joan Kerr (Lawnside) for "Waves," Katherine Patterson (Lawnside) for "Autumn."

In the same breath it is appropriate to commend the *Middlesex Book of Verse* (University of London Press), 4s. 6d., which is a collection of poems from certain schools. The verses are of many kinds and the humorous ones and some clever parodies are by no means out of place. Sir Benjamin Gott says in his kindly preface :—"Some of the verses included, though lacking in other respects, are good technically; others, whether good technically or not, show some imagination and feeling for poetic expression." E. D. BANGAY.

Mr. W. K. Lewis—as announced in our last issue (p. 380)—provides a premium of three guineas for poems on "Myself." As artists, particularly in the days of old, were adepts at painting their own portraits, why should not poets do the same? Instead of seeing ourselves as others see us, why should we not try to reveal ourselves to others and help them to see us with our own eyes? No set of people are more misunderstood and misrepresented than poets. None are more sensitive or difficult to understand. MSS. should reach the Editor not later than November 25th in envelopes endorsed "Lewis Premium."

The usual premium of £2 for the best poem or poem submitted to the Premium Editor during the month (without limitation of subject) is continued. All MSS. should be addressed to "The Premium Editor," the Poets' Fellowship, THE POETRY REVIEW Office, before December 1st, accompanied by stamped addressed envelope, or international coupon, and, if criticism is desired, 2s. 6d. (If a more detailed postal criticism is desired, 5s. should be sent.)

For the standing notices of the Young People's Verse Competitions, which are continuous, see pages 70 and 148. MSS. may be sent in at any time for early adjudication.

HOW WILL IT BE ?

HOW will it be ?—a gradual decline ?—
A waning, wasting, and a withering ?—
By slow degrees to part with everything,
Till nothing but a breath remains as mine ?
Or, suddenly at sea, or on the line,
Or, by the snapping of a vital spring—
A quick collapse, a momentary sting,
A severed artery, a fractured spine ?
How will it be ?—impossible to tell,
Perhaps an agony, perhaps a dream !
My one desire, that I may meet it well,
Nor flinch when facing the ordeal supreme ;
No hope of heaven have I, nor fear of hell,
Once Charon's ferried me across the stream.

W. S. GODFREY.

Mr. Alfred Noyes revealed himself as a poet with a charming personality and a whimsical sense of humour when he read his own poems in connection with Messrs. Foyle's Literary Lectures. Mr. Noyes is a poet of the traditional type whose lineal ancestor was known primarily as a singer : the form of poetry, he believes, should be essentially musical, and he is impatient of the modern so-called poet to whom music and rhythm are anathema.

He told with glee the tale of two young men who determined to play on the tendency of editors to accept any monstrosity in their anxiety to be modern and the foolishness of the public in following them. At one sitting they wrote a number of pieces conspicuous for their lack of rhythm and the absurdity of their sentiment and posted them to an editor. They were seized upon avidly as wonderful expressions of the modern spirit : their vogue spread over two continents ; professors praised them and the public raved over them.

Against these modern poets of inharmony Mr. Noyes quoted Tennyson, who was assuredly the greatest master of the musical soul of poetry, and he regretted that the author of *Tears, idle tears* was overwhelmed for the time being by the clatter of the moderns. Music, however, would come into its own once more and poetry again express the rhythm to which all life moves and grows. None could count John Keats as naught, and did not Keats write, with his keen sense of the rhythmic beauty, which is the life of all reality, " Beauty is truth, truth beauty—this is all ye know on earth and all ye need to know " ? That, in spite of the jarring medley, with which the public is fed so much to-day in the name of poetry, there is still a longing for beauty and rhythm and their expression in verse was shown by the very large number who endeavoured to hear Mr. Noyes and who had to be turned away for lack of accommodation.

TO THE EDITOR:

POETRY AND LIFE

MANY will be heartened after reading the spirited championship of Poetry by Humbert Wolfe in the *Daily Express*. We may deplore the necessity for such championship, but we must admit that necessity.

May a " mere layman " essay to break a lance in the cause ?

Verily, it is difficult to eradicate from the mind of the average man the notion that a poet is a long-haired animal of woe-begone aspect, an amiable lunatic, who, when he is not engaged in apostrophising the stars is inditing sonnets to his mistress' eyebrows ; a creature remote from the practicalities of everyday life, sadly in need of a keeper, and certainly not to be trusted with the spending of a five-pound note. Would not the average bank-manager " fire " instanter a clerk discovered to be " addicted to poetry " ? There is no money in it ; no more need be said. [We know bank officials who do not disguise their keen interest in poetry.—ED.]

Yet, when the shop is shut and the busy mart is silent, may not the mind seek some relaxation from counting the till or balancing the bank-book, and anticipating the cares of to-morrow ? May we not for a brief hour give reins to the imagination and let fancy and romance have full play ?

Closely allied to poetry is sentiment, and does not sentiment play a great part in life ? In all lands millions of prayers ascend daily to an unseen God. Is there no poetry in prayer, in praise, in worship ? All our guesses anent a future existence, the Elysian fields, Nirvana, Paradise, have their foundations in poetical imagination, and yet, forsooth, the materialist—the realist—would have us banish fancy and romance ; and this in spite of the fact that we have recently seen a world in arms fighting to dethrone a cold-blooded, non-moral materialism.

Is not our conception of the soul, of immortality, essentially poetical ?

> " Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting,
> The soul that rises in us, our life's star,
> Hath had elsewhere its setting,
> And cometh from afar."

> " Where there's no ill, no grief, but sleep has mending."

> " We shall gain a peace unshaken by pain for ever."

When Rupert Brooke " went down with unreluctant tread into the darkness," his poetic soul felt " that there's some corner of a foreign field that is for ever England." Is not this a fine thought ?

Poets have ever inspired the most chivalrous deeds ; have ever championed the right against the wrong ; have ever pleaded for the destitute and outcast, and aroused mankind to its duty toward the submerged—to set their faltering feet toward the light and bid them live anew. Poets have been " our constant friends in all vicissitudes,

our comforters in sorrow, our companions in solitude, our healers in affliction; and the debt we owe them is incalculable."

Poetry is inextricably interwoven in the warp and woof of our daily life, in all the happy intimacies of our homes, in our daily prayers;

> "But so the whole round earth is everyway
> Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

Poets have been the champions of Liberty; witness Milton, Byron, Shelley, and many others:

> "We must be free or die who speak the tongue
> That Shakespeare spoke, the faith and morals hold
> That Milton held."

Poets have preached an imperishable faith in the regeneration of mankind; "I hold it truth—that men may rise on stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things."

Who is not nerved and heartened by the virile optimism of Browning?

> "One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward,
> Never doubted clouds would break,
> Never dreamed though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
> Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, sleep to wake."

One might strengthen the case for Poetry by dwelling on the æsthetic side; the organ-roll of Homer's music, the stately measure of Virgil, haunting cadences of Keats, the tender sweetness of Tennyson's lyrics; but no further plea is necessary; the claims of Poetry are irrefutable.

"The poetry of earth is never dead." Rather is it a living force, a flaming torch to light the way to exalted deeds, an undying source of inspiration to the higher life. To-day may a real understanding of all that poetry stands for help to herald the dawn of a brighter and a better world!

Highgate, N.6. ARTHUR C. DENT.

* * *

It is some time since Miss Angela Cave contributed to THE POETRY REVIEW, but we recognize the colour of her work, and her predilection for the jewelled word in *The Mermaid Tavern* (Blackwell, 2s.), the Newdigate Prize Poem for this year.

Professor H. W. Garrod's Warton Lecture, *The Poetry of Collins* (Humphrey Milford, 1s.), is an excellent exposition, and a piece of fine criticism. The conclusion of the matter is, as the lecturer puts it: "Collins' poetry as a whole wants sentiment and mystery—no one perhaps has ever taken Collins to his heart. Sentiment and mystery: by these things poetry lives—so at least I am old-fashioned enough to believe. *Et tout le reste est littérature.*" We agree.

HOW A VERSE-WRITING GROUP IS CARRIED ON

AT the recent National Pen-Women's Convention at Washington, Mrs. Marie Tello Phillips, our Pittsburgh president, described how our poets' fellowship in Pittsburgh functions. She pointed out that " the writing of verses has become so general, that we have, in every community, many writers who produce fairly good verse and who are interested in doing something better, perhaps in achieving poetry. Groups organized for mutual helpfulness may supply the sympathetic atmosphere conducive to inspiration and creation.

" Our Pittsburgh organization is several years old, and the members show growth in knowledge, art, facility, and marketing. We are fortunate in having good fellowship. A desire to be mutually helpful is essential. Poets being of sensitive make-up, re-act favourably to understanding and encouragement. Many of the master poets were centres of such groups and sought the company of others of similar tastes.

" An efficient chairman will guide discussion so that it is general, and so all may advantage by it. Irrelevant topics are taboo, and conversation is centred upon poetry and kindred subjects with opportunity for exchange of literary experiences as to markets, acceptances, and publications.

" A poetry contest for each meeting proves an incentive for writing. Manuscripts are typed double-spaced and unsigned, and are read aloud twice by two good readers, anonymously and without comment. The copies are passed to members as read, as many have to read silently to be able to choose. The ideal procedure would be to have as many copies as judges, but that is hardly practicable in informal meetings. A distinguished visitor is sometimes asked to judge.

" The reading aloud of contributions by a good reader lends the music of the spoken voice, affords a means of comparison, and presents material for later discussion ; all of which is enlightening and instructive, serving to form correct standards and cultivate good taste. To prevent mere caprice in choosing, sometimes three selections are voted on, for first, second, and third places ; the first given ten counts, the second nine, and the third eight. After the secret voting by ballot, two tellers count and announce the vote. Hostesses for the occasion supply a modest prize, usually a book of poetry. Our last prizes, through the generosity of a member, were Braithwaite's, 1927. Absentees and non-resident members send their contributions to the contests, which are very popular and an incentive to attendance. The luncheon menus are kept simple, usually from fifty cents to a dollar. The contest being over, the voters, with or without necessarily disclosing their choice, are invited to express the views governing it ; such as the following : Trite or bromidic expression will surely mar the beauty of any composition and disqualify it. Things that have been said before cannot be borrowed, no matter how beautifully they express the thought, for originality ranks first as a requirement.

Easy rhymes, used by all beginners, produce only jingles. Words and inversions of nouns and adjectives that are just used because they rhyme and not because they aptly fit the thought, should be avoided. There should be a rhythmic pattern to fit the subject; it should not be "sculptured verse" as Hilaire Belloc puts it. Words and contractions too archaic for prose of to-day should not be used in the poetry. If the selection is merely rhymed prose it is not poetry, though it might qualify as verse. Knowledge of the judicious use of rhyme, rhythm, tone-colour, imagery, alliteration, metaphor, simile, and other figures that enhance beauty of speech are needed to express poetry. In the contests we endeavour to select for first, second, or third place the selection that comes nearest to our conception of a poem.

"The number of people who write fairly good verse to-day are legion, but those who succeed in writing one poem are few. The verse will die, but the one poem stands a good chance of living for ever."

* * *

The Miniature Theatre at Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Of considerable interest is the experiment of Mr. M. Raymond Woolf in building and equipping at his own expense a Miniature Theatre in his home at Newcastle-on-Tyne for the stimulation of local interest in neglected classical plays and verse. These plays he produces primarily for their dramatic and poetic value. Mr. Woolf is a licentiate in elocution of the Royal Academy of Music and of the Guildhall School of Music. He is a teacher in the Newcastle Pianoforte and Vocal School of Music, and will act as a Tyneside representative at the examinations of the Poetry Society. At the productions of the Miniature Theatre the elocution of the actors counts for a great deal more than anything else. At each performance a special feature is made of verse-speaking, and great emphasis is laid on the importance of the spoken word.

This is done not from choice only but from necessity. The decoration of the stage has a classical simplicity. Neither scenery nor trappings distract the mind through the eye; but the ear is aided in every way that it may gain the greatest measure of enjoyment.

The maximum capacity of the theatre is seventy, but so great is the demand for admission, which is free to the general public, that, lately, efforts have had to be made to find room for more. Even then many are turned away from the productions. This despite what would appear to be the very limited appeal of the plays selected for performance. The stage is as small as it could be, measuring only twelve feet by eight, yet skilful grouping finds room for as many as six actors. It is draped with black curtains, but the proscenium is relieved by futuristic designs in orange. Everything is starkly plain and simple, but ingenious lighting heightens the effect and adds to the suggestiveness of the work being performed.

Mr. Woolf's chief object in building the theatre was to encourage those who are attracted by the poetic aspects of dramatic literature. His players are all amateurs, but they throw themselves wholeheartedly into the work. With Mr. Woolf's able guidance they reach a very high standard of elocution. In this respect the producer is a hard taskmaster, and endeavours to improve his company at each performance.

A forthcoming production of particular interest is Stephen Phillips's *The Sin of David.* Work by Laurence Binyon and Gordon Bottomley is to be done in the near future. The theatre has already been open for nine months, and now that it is well established and has a regular following it is intended to increase the number of productions, which have been limited to one a month. Indeed, this season it is hoped to produce work every Sunday evening.

GEOFFREY MURRAY.

* * *

THE RAWNSLEY MEMORIAL GOLD MEDAL

We have to remind members of The Poetry Society that the family of the late Mr. W. F. Rawnsley, in conjunction with the Council of the Poetry Society (Incorporated), have endowed an annual gold medal to be competed for within the Society by readers of poetry, constituting a most appropriate memorial to the first Life Member and for many years the Elder Councillor, and for several years the devoted President of the Society, who was particularly concerned with the reading of poetry and went about giving readings in schools, from Eton and Uppingham to local elementary schools, where he was heard gladly and left behind an endurable impression of the magic and beauty of fine poetry, especially of that of his friend, Alfred Tennyson.

The medal, which has been specially designed, will be competed for annually at a public reading to be held in London, which, this year, will be held on November 20th, at 19 Grosvenor Square, W.1, by gracious permission of Lady Beecham.

Any member of The Poetry Society may enter. It is suggested that Centres in particular should compete, arranging a preliminary competition within each for the selection of representative readers. Schools associated with the Society may also send up one or more representative competitors.

All competitors, whether local or general, will be required to pay an entrance fee of 5s., out of which the expenses of the competition, other than the cost of the Medal, will be met.

On sending in their entries to the local or general secretary not later than November 14th, competitors must notify the poem or selection from a poem they intend to read and supply a copy of the words. Each reading should not take more than five minutes. Members who wish to be present at the Reading are requested to apply to the General Secretary of The Poetry Society for an invitation or ticket, (free), guest ticket, 2/6.

A POETS' CALENDAR

NOVEMBER.

2. Richard Hooker, d. 1600.
8. The Earl of Lytton, b. 1831; Milton, d. 1674.
9. William Camden, d. 1623.
10. Martin Luther, b. 1483; Oliver Goldsmith, b. 1728; Schiller, b. 1759.
12. Mrs. Gaskell, d. 1865; Richard Baxter, b. 1615.
13. A. H. Clough, d. 1861; R. L. Stevenson, b. 1850.
21. Professor Skeat, b. 1835.
22. George Eliot, b. 1819.
23. Richard Hakluyt, d. 1616.
24. John Knox, d. 1572.
26. Cowper, b. 1731.
27. Mrs. Alice Meynell, d. 1922.
28. William Blake, b. 1757; Leslie Stephen, b. 1832; Washington Irving, d. 1889.
29. F. C. Burnand, b. 1836.
30. Sir Philip Sidney, b. 1554; Mark Twain, b. 1835; J. Sheridan Knowles, d. 1862; Swift, b. 1667.

DECEMBER.

3. David Gray, d. 1861; R. L. Stevenson, d. 1894
4. Carlyle, b 1795
5. Sir Henry Wotton, d. 1639.
6. Dora Greenwell, b. 1821
7. A. Cunningham, b. 1784.
8. De Quincey, d. 1859.
9. Milton, b. 1608; Stephen Phillips, d. 1915.
10. George Macdonald, b. 1824.
11. Richard Doyle, d. 1883.
12. Robert Browning, d. 1889; Dr. Samuel Johnson, d. 1784.
13. Sir J. W. Paton, b. 1821.
15. Izaac Walton, d. 1883.
16. Jane Austen, b. 1775.
17. Whittier, b. 1807.
18. Samuel Rogers, d. 1855.
19. Emily Brontë, d. 1848; Horatius Bonar, b. 1808.
20. Bishop Thomas Wilson, b. 1663.
21. Disraeli, b. 1805.
22. George Eliot, d. 1880.
24. Thackeray, d. 1863; Matthew Arnold, b. 1822.
25. Crabbe, b. 1754.
26. T. Gray, b. 1716.
27. C. Lamb, d. 1834.
28. Macaulay, d. 1859.
29. Christine Rosetti, d. 1895.
30. R. Kipling, b. 1865.
31. Alexander Smith, b. 1829.

The beauty of holiness that envelops the best type of modern education—a glowing serenity and certainty and quietude of effort—gave distinction to a recent production by the girls of Lawnside, Great Malvern, of a dramatized version of the Adonais myth, with speeches and choruses drawn from Shelley's magnificent elegy and other poems, skilfully blended by Miss Barrows, who is a dramatist in her own right. The lines were beautifully, eagerly spoken by individuals and groups who formed kaleidoscopic pictures of artfully blended colours and luminous limbs that outshone the most harmoniously vivid of the old Italian masters.

* * *

"The whole secret of remaining young, in spite of years, and even of grey hairs," declared Amiel, "is to cherish enthusiasm in oneself by poetry, by contemplation, by charity—that is, by the maintenance of harmony in the soul."